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THE

WORKS

OF

The late Reverend

JAMES HERVEY, A. M.

Rector of Weſton-Favell, in Northamptonſhire.

VOLUME IV.

CONTAINING

ASPASIO VINDICATED,

In ELEVEN LETTERS from Mr HERVEY to Mr JOHN WESLEY, in anſwer to that Gentleman's Remarks on THERON and ASPASIO. With Mr WESLEY'S LETTER prefixed.

TO WHICH IS ANNEXED,

A DEFENCE of THERON and ASPASIO, againſt the Objections contained in Mr SANDEMAN'S *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*. With Mr HERVEY'S Letters to the Author prefixed.

I marvel, that ye are ſo ſoon removed from him that called you into the grace of Chriſt, unto another goſpel: which is not another; but there be ſome that trouble you, and would pervert the goſpel of Chriſt. Gal. i. 6, 7.

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ASPASIO VINDICATED.

PREFACE.

THE following letters were written by my late brother, in anſwer to a *piece*, which was firſt ſent him from the Rev. Mr *John Weſley*, by way of private letter, containing ſome remarks which that gentleman had made on reading *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. When my brother had read it over, he thought it beſt to be ſilent, as it contained nothing which could materially affect his judgment in regard to the work it cenſured: for this reaſon, as well as for peace ſake, he laid it by him unanſwered.—Mr *Weſley* then publiſhed a pamphlet, which he entitled *A preſervative againſt unſettled notions in religion;* in which he printed the above-mentioned letter.

This my brother looked upon as a ſummons to the bar of the Public; and upon this occaſion, in a letter to a friend, dated *June* 23. 1758, writes as follows:

[" My dear friend,

" I little thought, when I put Mr *Weſley*'s manu-
" ſcript into your hand, that I ſhould ſee it in print ſo
" ſoon. I took very little notice of it, and let it lie
" by me ſeveral months, without giving it an attentive
" conſideration ‡. It ſeemed to me ſo palpably weak,
" dealing

‡ Afterwards he read it again, and gave it, what he calls in the beginning of the firſt letter, " *a careful peruſal.*"

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" dealing only in positive assertions and positive deni-
" als, that I could not imagine he would adventure it
" into the world, without very great alterations. But
" it is now come abroad, just as you received it, in a
" two shillings pamphlet, entitled, *A preservative a-*
" *gainst unsettled notions in religion*. Of this pamphlet
" what he has wrote against me, makes only a small
" part. Now then the question is, Whether I shall
" attempt to answer it? Give me your opinion, as
" you have given me your assistance; and may the
" Father of mercies give you increase of knowledge
" and utterance, of peace and joy in the Holy Ghost."]

Between this and the *October* following, my brother began the letters contained in this volume, of which he thus speaks in another letter to his friend, dated *October* 24. 1758.

["My dear friend,

" Let me repeat my thanks for the trouble you
" have taken, and for the assistance you have given
" me, in relation to my controversy with Mr *Wesley*.
" He is so unfair in his quotations, and so magisterial
" in his manner, th t I find it no small difficulty, to
" preserve the decency of the gentleman, and the
" meekness of the Christian, in my intended answer.
" May our divine Master aid me in both these instan-
" ces, or else not suffer me to write at all."]

When, in the *December* following, I was sent for to *Weston*, in the very last period of my brother's long illness,—I asked him (the evening before he died) " what
" he would have done with the letters to Mr *Wesley*,
" whether he would have them published after his
" death?"—He answered—" By no means, because he
" had only transcribed about half of them fair for the
" press; but as the corrections and alterations of the
" latter part were mostly in short-hand, it would be
" difficult to understand them, especially as some of
" the short-hand was entirely his own, and others
" could not make it out; therefore," he said, " as it is

" not

" not a finiſhed piece, I deſire you will think no more " about it."

As theſe were his laſt orders concerning theſe letters, I thought it right to obey them; and therefore I withſtood the repeated ſolicitations of many of his friends, who wanted to have them printed; alledging the ſervice they might be of to allay the groundleſs prejudices, which the *Preſervative* might occaſion in the minds of many, againſt my brother's other writings, as well as the utility of them in general, as they contained ſo maſterly a defence of " *the truth as it is in JESUS.*"

But, notwithſtanding the regard I had for the perſons who ſolicited the publication, I could not be perſuaded to print the letters; and they never had appeared in public with my conſent, had not a ſurreptitious edition of them lately made its way from the preſs, and was I not under a firm perſuaſion *that* will be followed by *more*.

As this is the caſe, I think it my duty to the memory of my late brother, to ſend forth as correct an edition as I poſſibly can; for as to *that* which has appeared (from what editor I know not,) it is ſo faulty and incorrect, that but little judgment can be formed from it, of the propriety and force of my brother's anſwers to Mr *Weſley*.

As to the unfairneſs of publiſhing my brother's letters without my conſent, and the injuſtice to his memory, in ſending ſo mangled a performance out under his name, they are too apparent to need any proof: and though the editor, as I have been informed, gave away the whole impreſſion, ſo that it is plain, lucre was not the motive of his proceeding, and I would charitably hope he did it with a view of benefiting his readers; yet it is ſo like *doing evil that good may come*, as, in my opinion, to be quite unjuſtifiable.

However, as the only way now left to remedy in ſome ſort what has been done, and to prevent a further impoſition on the public, from worſe motives

than actuated this publisher, I have called a friend to my assistance; and, by this means, present the reader with as perfect a copy of these letters, as can possibly be made out from the original manuscript now in my hands.

That the reader may judge more clearly of the state of the controversy between my late brother and Mr *Wesley*, I have thought it right to subjoin Mr *Wesley*'s letter, word for word, as it stands in the *Preservative*.

A LETTER to the *Rev. Mr* ———

DEAR SIR, *Oct.* 15. 1756.

A Considerable time since I sent you a few hasty thoughts which occurred to me on reading the dialogues between *Theron* and *Aspasio*. I have not been favoured with any answer. Yet, upon another and a more careful perusal of them, I could not but set down some obvious reflections, which I would rather have communicated, before those dialogues were published.

IN the first dialogue there are several just and strong observations, which may be of use to every serious reader. In the second, is not the description often too laboured, the language too stiff, and affected? Yet the reflections on the creation (in the 52d and following pages, vol. I.) make abundant amends for this. (I cite the pages according to the *Dublin* edition, having wrote the rough draught of what follows, in *Ireland* *.)

* The pages in this edition refer to the second and third volumes of our author's works; vol. I. denoting the first volume of THERON and ASPASIO, and vol. II. denoting the second volume of that work. The reader will easily see, that Mr *Wesley* has, in most cases, quoted very unfairly.

P. 62. Is *juſtification* more or leſs, than GOD's pardoning and accepting a ſinner thro' the merits of *Chriſt?* That GOD herein "reckons the righteouſneſs and obedience which *Chriſt* performed *as our own*;" I allow, if by that ambiguous expreſſion, you mean only, as you here explain it yourſelf, "they are as effectual for obtaining our ſalvation, *as if they were our own* perſonal qualifications." P. 63.

P. 66. "WE are not ſolicitous, as to any *particular* ſet of *phraſes*. Only let men be humbled, as repenting criminals, at *Chriſt*'s feet; let them rely, as devoted penſioners, on his merits; and they are undoubtedly in the way to a bliſsful immortality." Then for *Chriſt*'s ſake, and for the ſake of the immortal ſouls which he has purchaſed with his blood, do not diſpute for that *particular phraſe*, *the imputed righteouſneſs of* Chriſt. It is not ſcriptural; it is not neceſſary. Men who ſcruple to uſe, men who never heard the expreſſion, may yet "be humbled, as *repenting criminals*, at his feet, and rely, as *devoted penſioners*, on his merits." But it has done immenſe hurt. I have had abundant proof, that the frequent uſe of this unneceſſary phraſe, inſtead of "furthering mens progreſs in vital holineſs," has made them ſatisfied without any holineſs at all; yea, and encouraged them to work all uncleanneſs with greedineſs.

P. 68. "To aſcribe pardon to *Chriſt*'s *paſſive*, eternal life to his *active* righteouſneſs, is fanciful rather than judicious. His univerſal obedience, from his birth to his death, is the one foundation of my hope."

THIS is unqueſtionably right. But if it be, there is no manner of need, to make the imputation of his *active* righteouſneſs, a ſeparate and laboured head of diſcourſe. O that you had been content with this plain ſcriptural account, and ſpared ſome of the *dialogues* and *letters* that follow!

THE third and fourth dialogues contain an admirable illuſtration and confirmation of the great doctrine of

of *Chriſt*'s ſatisfaction. Yet even here I obſerve a few paſſages, which are liable to ſome exception.

P. 77. "SATISFACTION was made to the divine law." I do not remember any ſuch expreſſion in ſcripture. This way of ſpeaking of the law as a *perſon injured* and to be *ſatisfied*, ſeems hardly defenſible.

P. 100. "THE *death* of *Chriſt* procured the *pardon* and *acceptance* of believers, even before he came in the fleſh." Yea, and ever ſince. In this we all agree. And why ſhould we contend for any thing more?

P. 154. "ALL the benefits of the new covenant are the *purchaſe of his blood*." Surely they are. And after this has been fully proved, where is the need, where is the uſe, of contending ſo ſtrenuouſly, for the *imputation of his righteouſneſs*, as is done in the fifth and ſixth dialogues?

P. 169. "IF he was our ſubſtitute as to *penal ſufferings*, why not as to *juſtifying obedience*?"

THE former is expreſſly aſſerted in ſcripture. The latter is not expreſſly aſſerted there.

P. 181. "As ſin and miſery have *abounded* thro' the firſt *Adam*, mercy and grace have *much more abounded* through the ſecond. So that none can have any reaſon to complain." No, not if the ſecond *Adam* died for all. Otherwiſe, all for whom he did not die, have great reaſon to complain. For they inevitably *fall* by the firſt *Adam*, without any *help* from the ſecond.

P. 184. "THE whole world of believers" is an expreſſion which never occurs in ſcripture; nor has it any countenance there: the world in the inſpired writings being conſtantly taken either in an univerſal or in a bad ſenſe; either for the whole of mankind, or for that part of them who know not GOD.

P. 186. "IN *the* LORD *ſhall all the houſe of* Iſrael be *juſtified*." It ought unqueſtionably to be rendered, "*by* or *through the* LORD:" this argument therefore proves nothing. "*Ye are complete in him*." The words literally

literally rendered are, *Ye are filled with him.* And the whole paſſage, as any unprejudiſed reader may obſerve, relates to ſanctification, not juſtification.

P. 186. "THEY are accepted *for* Chriſt's *ſake;* this is juſtification thro' *imputed righteouſneſs.*" That remains to be proved. Many allow the former, who cannot allow the latter.

P. 187. *Theron.* "I SEE no occaſion for ſuch *nice diſtinctions and metaphyſical ſubtilties.*

Aſp. You oblige us to make uſe of them, by confounding theſe very different ideas, that is, *Chriſt*'s active and paſſive righteouſneſs."

I ANSWER, We do not *confound* theſe: but neither do we *ſeparate* them. Nor have we any authority from ſcripture, for either thinking or ſpeaking of one ſeparate from the other. And this whole debate on one of them ſeparate from the other, is a mere *metaphyſical ſubtilty.*

P. 188. "THE righteouſneſs which juſtifies us, is already *wrought out.*"—A crude, unſcriptural expreſſion! "It was *ſet on foot, carried on, completed.*"—O vain philoſophy! The plain truth is, *Chriſt* lived and *taſted death for every man*; and thro' the merits of his life and death, every believer is juſtified.

P. 189. "WHOEVER perverts ſo glorious a doctrine, ſhews he never believed." Not ſo. They who *turn back as a dog to the vomit*, had once *eſcaped the pollutions of the world by the knowledge of* Chriſt.

P. 189, 90. "THE goodneſs of GOD leadeth to repentance." This is unqueſtionably true. But the *nice, metaphyſical* doctrine of *imputed righteouſneſs*, leads not to repentance, but to licentiouſneſs.

P. 190. "THE believer *cannot but* add to his faith, works of righteouſneſs." During his firſt love, this is often true. But it is not true afterwards, as we know and feel by melancholy experience.

P. 192. "WE no longer obey, *in order* to lay the foundation for our final acceptance." No; that foundation

dation is already laid in the merits of *Chriſt*. Yet we obey, *in order* to our final acceptance through his merits. And in this ſenſe, by obeying we *lay a good foundation, that we may attain eternal life*.

P. 192. "WE *eſtabliſh the law*: we provide for its honour, by the perfect obedience of *Chriſt*." Can you poſſibly think, St *Paul* meant this? that ſuch a thought ever entered into his mind? The plain meaning is, We eſtabliſh both the true ſenſe, and the effectual practice of it: we provide for its being both underſtood and practiſed in its full extent.

P. 193. "On thoſe who reject the atonement, juſt ſeverity." Was it ever poſſible for them, not to reject it? If not, how is it juſt, to caſt them into a lake of fire, for not doing what it was impoſſible they ſhould do? Would it be juſt (make it your own caſe) to caſt *you* into hell, for not touching heaven with your hand?

P. 196. "JUSTIFICATION is *complete* the firſt moment we believe, and is incapable of *augmentation*."

NOT ſo: there may be as many *degrees* in the *favour* as in the *image* of GOD.

P. 231. "ST PAUL often mentions *a righteouſneſs imputed:* (Not *a* righteouſneſs; never once; but ſimply *righteouſneſs*.) "What can this be, but *the righteouſneſs of* Chriſt?" He tells you himſelf, *Rom.* iv. 6. *To him that believeth on him that juſtifieth the ungodly*, faith *is imputed for righteouſneſs*. "Why is *Chriſt* ſtyled *Jehovah our righteouſneſs?*" Becauſe we are both juſtified and ſanctified through him.

P. 232. "My death, the cauſe of their forgiveneſs; my righteouſneſs, the ground of their acceptance."

How does this agree with P. 68. "To aſcribe pardon to *Chriſt*'s *paſſive*, eternal life to his *active* righteouſneſs, is fanciful rather than judicious?"

P. 236. "HE commends ſuch kinds of beneficence *only*, as were exerciſed to a diſciple as ſuch." Is not this a ſlip of the pen? Will not our LORD then commend,

mend, and reward eternally, all kinds of beneficence, provided they flowed from a principle of loving faith? Yea, that which was exercised to a Samaritan, a Jew, a Turk, or an Heathen? Even these, I would not term "transient bubbles," though they do not *procure* our justification.

P. 238. "How must our righteousness exceed that of the scribes and Pharisees? Not only in being sincere, but in possessing a *complete* righteousness, even that of *Christ*." Did our LORD mean this? Nothing less. He specifies, in the following parts of his sermon, the very instances wherein the righteousness of a Christian exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees.

P. 240. "HE brings this specious *hypocrite* to the test." How does it appear, that he was an *hypocrite?* Our LORD gives not the least intimation of it. Surely he *loved him*, not for his hypocrisy, but his sincerity!

YET he loved the world, and therefore could not keep any of the commandments in their spiritual meaning. And the keeping of these is undoubtedly the *way* to, though not the *cause* of, eternal life.

P. 242. "By *works his faith was made perfect;* appeared to be true." No: the natural sense of the word is, *By* the grace superadded while he wrought those *works*, *his faith was* literally *made perfect*.

Ibid. "HE *that doth righteousness is righteous*,—manifests the truth of his conversion." Nay; the plain meaning is, *He* alone *is* truly *righteous*, whose faith worketh by love.

Ibid. "ST JAMES speaks of the *justification of our faith*." Not unless you mean by that odd expression, our *faith* being *made perfect:* for so the apostle explains his own meaning. Perhaps the word *justified* is once used by St *Paul* for *manifested*.—But that does not prove, it is to be so understood here.

P. 244. "WHOSO *doth these things shall never fall* into total apostasy." How pleasing is this to flesh and

blood! But *David* says no such thing. His meaning is; *Whoso doth these things* to the end, *shall never fall* into hell.

THE seventh dialogue is full of important truths, Yet some expressions in it I can't commend.

P. 260. ONE *thing thou lackest*, the imputed righteousness of *Christ*." You cannot think this is the meaning of the text. Certainly the *one thing* our LORD meant was, the love of GOD. This was the thing he lacked.

P. 267. "Is the *obedience* of *Christ* insufficient to *accomplish* our justification?" Rather I would ask, Is the *death* of *Christ* insufficient to *purchase* it?

271. "THE saints in glory ascribe *the whole* of their salvation to the *blood* of the Lamb." So do I: and yet I believe he "obtained for all a *possibility* of "salvation."

P. 272. "THE terms of acceptance for *fallen* man were a *full satisfaction* to the divine justice, and a *complete conformity* to the divine law." This you take for granted; but I cannot allow.

THE *terms* of acceptance for fallen man are *repentance* and *faith*. *Repent ye, and believe the gospel.*

Ibid. "THERE are but two methods whereby any can be justified, either by a *perfect obedience* to the law, or because *Christ* hath kept the law in our stead." You should say, "or by *faith* in *Christ*." I then answer, This is true. And fallen man is justified, not by *perfect obedience*, but by *faith*. What *Christ* has done is the *foundation* of our justification, not the *term* or *condition* of it.

IN the eighth dialogue likewise there are many great truths, and yet some things liable to exception.

P. 300. "DAVID GOD himself dignifies with the *most exalted* of all characters." Far, very far from it. We have more exalted characters than *David*'s, both in the Old Testament and the New. Such are those of *Samuel*, *Daniel*, yea and *Job*, in the former; of St *Paul* and St *John* in the latter.

"BUT

"BUT GOD ſtyles him *a man after his own heart.*" This is the text which has cauſed many to miſtake: for want of conſidering, firſt, that this is ſaid of *David* in a *particular reſpect*, not with regard to his *whole character:* Secondly, the time, at which it was ſpoken. When was *David a man after* GOD's *own heart? When* GOD *found* him *following the ewes great with young*, when *he took him from the ſheep-folds*, *Pſal.* lxxviii. 71. It was in the 2d or 3d year of *Saul's* reign, that *Samuel* ſaid to him *The* LORD *hath ſought him a man after his own heart, and hath commanded him to be captain over his people*, 1 *Sam.* xiii. 14. But was he *a man after* GOD's *own heart* all his life? or in all particulars? So far from it, that we have few more exceptionable characters, among all the men of GOD recorded in ſcripture.

P. 309. "THERE *is not a juſt man upon earth that ſinneth not.*" *Solomon* might truly ſay ſo, before *Chriſt* came. And St *John* might, after he came, ſay as truly, *Whoſoever is born of* GOD *ſinneth not.* "But *in many things we offend all.*" That St *James* does not ſpeak this of himſelf, or of real *Chriſtians*, will clearly appear, to all who impartially conſider the context.

THE ninth dialogue proves excellently well, that we cannot be *juſtified by* our *works.*

BUT have you thoroughly conſidered the words which occur in the 318th page?

"O CHILDREN of *Adam*, you are *no longer* obliged, to love GOD with all your ſtrength, nor your neighbour as yourſelves. *Once* indeed I inſiſted upon abſolute purity of heart: *now* I can diſpenſe with ſome degrees of evil deſire. Since *Chriſt*"—has fulfilled the law *for you*, "you need not fulfill it. I will *connive* at, yea accommodate my demands to your weakneſs."

I AGREE with you, that "this doctrine makes the holy One of GOD a miniſter of ſin." And is it not your own? Is not this the very doctrine which you eſpouſe throughout your book?

I CANNOT but except to ſeveral paſſages alſo in the tenth dialogue. I aſk, firſt,

P. 341. "DOES the *righteouſneſs of* GOD ever mean" (as you affirm) "*the merits of* Chriſt?" I believe not once in all the ſcripture. It often means, and particularly in the epiſtle to the *Romans*, GOD's *method of juſtifying* ſinners. When therefore you ſay,

P. 342. "THE righteouſneſs of GOD means, ſuch a righteouſneſs as may juſtly challenge his acceptance," I cannot allow it at all: and this capital miſtake muſt needs lead you into many others. But I follow you ſtep by ſtep.

P. 343. "IN order to entitle us to a reward, there muſt be an imputation of righteouſneſs." There muſt be an intereſt in *Chriſt*. And then *every man ſhall receive his own reward, according to his own labour*.

P. 344. "A REBEL may be *forgiven*, without being reſtored to the dignity of a *ſon*." A rebel againſt an earthly king may; but not a rebel againſt GOD. In the very ſame moment that GOD forgives, we are the ſons of GOD. Therefore this is an idle diſpute. For *pardon* and *acceptance*, tho' they may be *diſtinguiſhed*, cannot be *divided*. The words of *Job* which you cite are wide of the queſtion. Thoſe of *Solomon* prove no more than this, (and who denies it?), that juſtification implies both *pardon* and *acceptance*.

P. 345. "GRACE *reigneth through righteouſneſs unto eternal life;*"—that is, The free love of GOD brings us, thro' juſtification and ſanctification, to glory. P. 346. "*That they may receive forgiveneſs, and a lot among the ſanctified:*" that is, that they may receive pardon, holineſs, heaven.

Ibid. "Is not the ſatisfaction made by the death of *Chriſt*, ſufficient to obtain both our full pardon and final happineſs?" Unqueſtionably it is, and neither of the texts you cite proves the contrary.

P. 347. "IF it was requiſite for *Chriſt* to be baptized, much more to fulfil the moral law."

I

I CANNOT prove that either the one or the other was requisite *in order* to his *purchasing* redemption for us.

P. 348, "By *Christ*'s sufferings alone, the law was not satisfied." Yes it was; for it required only the alternative, Obey or die. It required no man to obey and die too. If any man had perfectly obeyed, he would not have died. *Ibid.* "Where scripture ascribes *the whole* of our salvation to the death of *Christ*, a *part* of his humiliation is put for the *whole*." I cannot allow this without some proof. *He was obedient unto death* is no proof at all; as it does not necessarily imply any more, than that *he died in obedience* to the Father. In some texts there is a *necessity* of taking a part for the whole. But in these there is no such *necessity*.

P. 351. "CHRIST *undertook* to do every thing necessary for our redemption;" namely, in a *covenant* made with the Father. 'Tis sure, he *did* every thing necessary: but how does it appear, that he *undertook* this, before the foundation of the world, and that by a positive *covenant* between him and the Father?

YOU think this appears from four texts. 1. From that, *Thou gavest them to me*. Nay, when any believe, *the Father gave them* to *Christ*. But this proves no such previous contract. 2. GOD *hath laid upon him the iniquities of us all*. Neither does this prove any such thing. 3. That expression, *The counsel of peace shall be between them*, does not necessarily imply any more, than that both the Father and the Son would concur in the redemption of man. 4. *According to the counsel of his will*,—that is, in the way or method he had chosen. Therefore neither any of these texts, nor all of them, prove what they were brought to prove. They do by no means prove, that there ever was any such covenant made between the Father and the Son.

P. 353. "THE *conditions* of the covenant are recorded. *Lo, I come to do thy will.*" Nay, here is no mention

mention of any *covenant*, nor any thing from which it can be inferred. "The recompenſe ſtipulated in this glorious *treaty*."—But I ſee not one word of the treaty itſelf. Nor can I poſſibly allow the exiſtence of it without far other proof than this. *Ibid.* "Another copy of this grand *treaty* is recorded *Iſaiah* xlix. from the firſt to the ſixth verſe." I have read them, but cannot find a word about it, in all thoſe verſes. They contain neither more nor leſs than a prediction of the ſalvation of the *Gentiles*.

P. 354. "By the covenant of works, man was bound to obey *in his own perſon*." And ſo he is under the covenant of grace; tho' not in order to his juſtification. "The obedience of *our Surety* is accepted inſtead of *our own*." This is neither a ſafe nor a ſcriptural way of ſpeaking. I would ſimply ſay, *We are accepted thro' the Beloved. We have redemption thro' his blood.*

P. 354. "The ſecond covenant was not made with *Adam*, or any of his poſterity, but with *Chriſt*, in thoſe words, *The ſeed of the woman ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head*." For any authority you have from theſe words, you might as well have ſaid, it was made with the Holy Ghoſt. Theſe words were not ſpoken *to Chriſt*, but *of* him, and give not the leaſt intimation of any ſuch *covenant* as you plead for. They manifeſtly contain, if not a covenant made with, a promiſe made to *Adam* and all his poſterity.

P. 355. "Christ, we ſee, *undertook* to execute the conditions." We ſee no ſuch thing in this text. We ſee here only a promiſe of a Saviour, made by God to man.

Ibid. "'Tis true, I cannot fulfil the conditions." 'Tis not true. The conditions of the new covenant are, *Repent* and *believe*. And theſe you can fulfil, thro' *Chriſt* ſtrengthening you. "'Tis equally true this is not required at my hands." It is *equally* true, that is, abſolutely falſe, and moſt dangerouſly falſe. If we allow this, Antinomianiſm comes in with a full tide.

tide. "*Christ* has performed all that was *conditionary for me.*" Has he *repented* and *believed for you?* You endeavour to evade this by saying, "He performed all that was *conditionary* in the *covenant of works.*" This is nothing to the purpose; for we are not talking of that, but of the *covenant of grace.* Now he did not perform all that was *conditionary* in this covenant, unless he repented and believed. "But he did unspeakably more." It may be so. But he did not do this.

P. 360. "BUT if *Christ's perfect obedience* be ours, we have no more need of pardon than *Christ* himself." The consequence is good. You have started an objection which you cannot answer. You say indeed, "Yes, we do need pardon; for *in many things we offend all.*" What then? If his *obedience* be *ours*, we still *perfectly obey in him.*

P. 361. "BOTH the branches of the law, the *preceptive* and the *penal*, in the case of guilt contracted, must be satisfied." Not so. "*Christ* by his death alone, (so our church teaches) fully satisfied for the sins of the whole world." The same great truth is manifestly taught in the 31st article. Is it therefore fair, is it honest, for any one to plead the articles of our church in defence of absolute predestination? Seeing the 17th article barely *defines* the term, without either affirming or denying the thing: whereas the 31st totally overthrows and razes it from the foundation.

P. 362. "BELIEVERS who are notorious transgressors *in themselves*, have a sinless obedience *in Christ.*" O siren song! pleasing sound, to *James Wheatly! Thomas Williams! James Reiley!*

I KNOW not one sentence in the eleventh dialogue, which is liable to exception: but that grand doctrine of Christianity, original sin, is therein proved by irrefragable arguments.

THE twelfth likewise is unexceptionable, and contains such an illustration of the wisdom of GOD, in the structure

ſtructure of the human body, as I believe cannot be paralleled, in either ancient or modern writers.

THE former part of the thirteenth dialogue is admirable. To the latter I have ſome objection.

P. 518, 19. "*Elijah* failed in his reſignation, and even *Moſes* ſpake unadviſedly with his lips." It is true: but if you could likewiſe fix ſome blot upon venerable *Samuel* and beloved *Daniel*, it would prove nothing. For no ſcripture teaches, that the holineſs of *Chriſtians* is to be meaſured by that of any *Jew*.

P. 521. "Do not the beſt of men frequently feel diſorder in their affections? Do not they often complain, *When I would do good, evil is preſent with me?*" I believe not. You and I are only able to anſwer for ourſelves. "Do not they ſay, *We groan being burthened*,—with the workings of inbred corruption?" You know, this is not the meaning of the text. The whole context ſhews, the cauſe of that groaning was their longing *to be with* Chriſt.

Ibid. "THE cure" of ſin "will be perfected in heaven." Nay ſurely, in paradiſe, if no ſooner. "This is a noble prerogative of the beatific viſion." No: it would then come too late. If ſin remains in us till the day of judgment, it will remain for ever. "Our preſent bleſſedneſs does not conſiſt in being *free from ſin*." I really think it does. But whether it does or no, if we are not *free from ſin*, we are not Chriſtian believers. For to all theſe the apoſtle declares, *Being made free from ſin, ye are become the ſervants of righteouſneſs*, Rom. vi. 18.

P. 522. IF we were perfect in piety (St *John*'s word is, *perfect in love*,) *Chriſt*'s prieſtly office would be ſuperſeded." No: we ſhould ſtill need his Spirit (and conſequently his interceſſion) for the continuance of that love from moment to moment. Beſide, we ſhould ſtill be encompaſſed with infirmities, and liable to miſtakes; from which words or actions might follow, even though the heart was all love, which were not exactly

exactly right. Therefore, in all these respects, we should still have need of *Christ*'s priestly office: and therefore as long as he remains in the body, the greatest saint may say,

Every moment, *LORD*, I need
The merit of thy death.

The text cited from *Exodus* asserts nothing less than, that *iniquity* "cleaves to all *our holy things* till death."

Ibid. "SIN remains, that the righteousness of faith may have its due honour." And will the righteousness of faith have its due honour no longer than sin remains in us? Then it must remain, not only on earth and in paradise, but in heaven also—"And the sanctification of the Spirit its proper esteem." Would it not have more esteem, if it were a perfect work?

Ibid. "It (sin) will make us lowly in our own eyes." What, will pride make us lowly? Surely the utter destruction of pride would do this more effectually. P. 523. "It will make us compassionate." Would not an entire renewal in the image of GOD make us much more so? "It will teach us to admire the riches of grace." Yea, but a fuller experience of it, by a thorough sanctification of spirit, soul, and body, will make us admire it more. "It will reconcile us to death." Indeed it will not; nor will any thing do this, like perfect love.

P. 524. "IT will endear the blood and intercession of *Christ*." Nay, these can never be so dear to any, as to those who experience their full virtue, who are *filled with the fulness of* GOD. Nor can any "feel their continual need" of *Christ*, or "rely on him," in the manner which these do.

VOL. II. DIALOGUE 14. P. 9. "THE claims of the law are all answered." If so, Count *Zinzendorf* is absolutely in the right: neither GOD nor man can claim my obedience to it. Is not this Antinomianism without a mask?

P. 11. "YOUR sins are expiated through the

death of *Chriſt*, and *a righteouſneſs given you*, by which you have free acceſs to GOD." This is not ſcriptural language. I would ſimply ſay, *By him we have acceſs to the Father.*

THERE are many other expreſſions in this dialogue, to which I have the ſame objection, namely, 1. That they are unſcriptural; 2. That they directly lead to Antinomianiſm.

THE firſt letter contains ſome very uſeful heads of ſelf-examination. In the ſecond,

P. 44. I READ, "There is *a righteouſneſs* which ſupplies all that the creature needs. To prove this *momentous* point, is the deſign of the following ſheets."

I HAVE ſeen ſuch terrible effects of this unſcriptural way of ſpeaking, even on thoſe *who had once clean eſcaped from the pollutions of the world*, that I cannot but earneſtly wiſh, you would ſpeak no otherwiſe than do the oracles of GOD. Certainly this *mode of expreſſion* is not *momentous*. It is always *dangerous*, often *fatal*.

LETTER III. p. 47. "*Where ſin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as ſin had reigned unto death, ſo might grace*—the free love of GOD—*reign thro' righteouſneſs*, thro' our juſtification and ſanctification, *unto eternal life*, Rom. v. 20, 21. This is the plain natural meaning of the words. It does not appear, that one word is ſpoken here about *imputed righteouſneſs*: neither in the paſſages cited in the next page, from the common-prayer and the article. In the homily likewiſe that phraſe is not found at all, and the main ſtreſs is laid on *Chriſt's ſhedding his blood.* Nor is the *phraſe* (concerning the *thing* there is no queſtion) found in any part of the homilies.

P. 54. "IF the fathers are not explicit with regard to the imputation of *active* righteouſneſs, they abound in paſſages which evince the *ſubſtitution* of *Chriſt* in our ſtead: paſſages which diſclaim all dependence on any duties of our own, and fix our hopes wholly on the

the *merits* of our Saviour. When this is the caſe, I am very little ſolicitous about any *particular forms of expreſſion.*" O lay aſide then thoſe queſtionable, dangerous forms, and keep cloſely to the ſcriptural.

LETTER IV. p. 58. "The authority of our church and of thoſe eminent divines," does not touch thoſe *particular forms of expreſſion:* neither do any of the texts which you afterwards cite. As to the doctrine we are agreed.

P. 59. "THE *righteouſneſs of* GOD ſignifies, the righteouſneſs which God-man wrought out." No. It ſignifies GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners.

P. 60. "THE victims figured the *expiation* by *Chriſt*'s death, the cloathing with ſkins, the *imputation* of his righteouſneſs." That does not appear. Did not the one rather figure our juſtification, the other, our ſanctification?

P. 62. ALMOST every text quoted in this and the following letter, in ſupport of that *particular form of expreſſion*, is diſtorted above meaſure from the plain, obvious meaning, which is pointed out by the context. I ſhall inſtance in a few, and juſt ſet down their true meaning, without any farther remarks.

P. 63. To *ſhew unto man his uprightneſs*. To convince him of GOD's juſtice, in ſo puniſhing him.

P. 66. HE *ſhall receive the bleſſing*—pardon—*from the* LORD, *and righteouſneſs*—holineſs—*from the* GOD *of his ſalvation*,—the GOD who ſaveth him both from the guilt and from the power of ſin.

Ibid, I WILL *make mention of thy righteouſneſs only*. —Of thy *mercy*. So the word frequently means in the Old Teſtament. So it unqueſtionably means in that text, *In* (or by) *thy righteouſneſs ſhall they be exalted.*

P. 68. ZION *ſhall be redeemed with judgment*—after ſevere puniſhment—*and her converts with righteouſneſs*—with the tender mercy of GOD, following that puniſhment.

Ibid. IN (or *thro'*) *the* LORD *I have righteouſneſs*

and ſtrength, juſtification and ſanctification. P. 69. *He hath clothed me with the garments of ſalvation*,—ſaved me from the guilt and power of ſin: both of which are again expreſſed by, *He hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs*.

P. 70. My *righteouſneſs*—my mercy—*ſhall not be aboliſhed*.

P. 72. To *make reconciliation for iniquity*—to atone for all our ſins,—*and to bring in everlaſting righteouſneſs*, ſpotleſs holineſs into our ſouls. And this righteouſneſs is not *human*, but *divine*. It is the gift and the work of God.

P. 73. The Lord *our righteouſneſs*—The author both of our juſtification and ſanctification.

P. 84. "What righteouſneſs ſhall give us peace at the laſt day, inherent or imputed?" Both. *Chriſt* died for us and lives in us, *that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment*.

Letter V. p. 89. *That have obtained like precious faith thro' the righteouſneſs*—the mercy—*of our* Lord. *Seek ye the kingdom of* God *and his righteouſneſs*—the holineſs which ſprings from God reigning in you.

P. 91. Therein *is revealed the righteouſneſs of* God—God's method of juſtifying ſinners.

P. 92. 93. "We *eſtabliſh the law*, as we expect no ſalvation without a perfect conformity to it—namely, by *Chriſt*." Is not this a mere quibble? and a quibble, which, after all the laboured evaſions of *Witſius* and a thouſand more, does totally *make void the law?* But not ſo does St *Paul* teach. According to him, *Without holineſs*, perſonal holineſs, *no man ſhall ſee the* Lord. None, who is not *himſelf* conformed to the law of God here, *ſhall ſee the* Lord in glory.

This is the grand, palpable objection to that whole ſcheme. It directly *makes void the law*. It makes thouſands content to live and die *tranſgreſſors of the law*, becauſe *Chriſt* fulfilled it *for them*. Therefore, though

though I believe, he hath *lived* and *died* for me, yet I would ſpeak very tenderly and ſparingly of the former, (and *never*, ſeparately from the latter,) even as ſparingly as do the ſcriptures, for fear of this dreadful conſequence.

P. 96. "THE *gift of righteouſneſs* muſt ſignify a righteouſneſs not their own." Yes, it ſignifies the righteouſneſs or holineſs, which GOD gives to and works in them.

P. 97. "THE *obedience of one* is *Chriſt*'s actual performance of the whole law." So here his paſſion is fairly left out! Whereas his *becoming obedient unto death*, that is, dying for man, is certainly the chief part, if not the whole which is meant by that expreſſion.

Ibid. "THAT *the righteouſneſs of the law might be fulfilled in us*.—That is, by our repreſentative in our nature. Amazing! but this, you ſay, "agrees with the tenor of the apoſtle's arguing. For he is demonſtrating we cannot be juſtified by our own conformity to the law." No: not here. He is not ſpeaking here of the *cauſe* of our juſtification, but the *fruits* of it. Therefore that unnatural ſenſe of his words does not at all "agree with the tenor of his arguing."

P. 98. "I TOTALLY deny the criticiſm on δικαιοσυνη and δικαιωμα, and cannot conceive on what authority it is founded. O how deep an averſion to inward holineſs does this ſcheme naturally create?

P. 100. "THE righteouſneſs they attained could not be any perſonal righteouſneſs." Certainly it was. It was *implanted* as well as *imputed*.

P. 104. "FOR *inſtruction in righteouſneſs*, in the righteouſneſs of *Chriſt*." Was there ever ſuch a comment before? The plain meaning is, *For training up in holineſs* of heart and of life.

P. 105. *He ſhall convince the world of righteouſneſs*.—That I am not a ſinner, but innocent and holy.

P. 107. "THAT *we might be made the righteouſneſs of* GOD *in him*. Not intrinſically, but imputatively."

Both

Both the one and the other. GOD *through him*, firſt *accounts* and then *makes* us *righteous*. Accordingly,

P. 111. THE *righteouſneſs which is of* GOD *by faith*, is both *imputed and inherent*.

P. 112. "MY faith fixes on both the *meritorious life* and *atoning death* of *Chriſt*." Here we clearly agree. Hold then to this, and never talk of the former without the latter. If you do, you cannot ſay, "Here we are expoſed to no hazard." Yes, you are to an exceeding great one; even the hazard of living and dying without holineſs. And then we are loſt for ever.

THE ſixth letter contains an admirable account of the earth and its atmoſphere, and comprizes abundance of ſenſe in a narrow compaſs, and expreſſed in beautiful language.

P. 138. GEMS have "a ſeat on the virtuous fair one's breaſt." I cannot reconcile this with St *Paul*. He ſays, *Not with pearls*: by a parity of reaſon, not with diamonds. But in all things I perceive, you are too favourable, both to *the deſire of the fleſh* and *the deſire of the eye*. You are a gentle caſuiſt as to every ſelf-indulgence which a plentiful fortune can furniſh.

P. 144. "OUR Saviour's obedience."—O ſay, with the good old Puritans, our Saviour's *death* or *merits*. We ſwarm with Antinomians on every ſide. Why are you at ſuch pains to increaſe their number?

P. 157. My *mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy righteouſneſs and thy ſalvation*.—Thy mercy which brings my ſalvation.

THE eighth letter is an excellent deſcription of the ſupreme greatneſs of *Chriſt*. I do not obſerve one ſentence it it, which I cannot chearfully ſubſcribe to.

THE ninth letter, containing a deſcription of the ſea, with various inferences deduced therefrom, is likewiſe a maſter-piece, for juſtneſs of ſentiment, as well as beauty of language. But I doubt whether "mere *ſhrimps*," P. 214. be not too low an expreſſion; and whether you might not as well have ſaid nothing of

"*cod*,

"*cod*, the ſtanding repaſt of *Lent;*" or concerning "the exquiſite reliſh of *turbot*, or the deliciouſneſs of "*ſturgeon*," p. 218. Are not ſuch obſervations beneath the dignity of a miniſter of *Chriſt?* I have the ſame doubt concerning what is ſaid (p. 236.) of "delicately-flavoured *tea*, finely-ſcented *coffee;* the *friendly bowl*, the pyramid of *Italian* figs, and the *piſtacia*-nut of *Aleppo*." Beſide that the mentioning theſe in ſuch a manner is a ſtrong encouragement of luxury and ſenſuality. And does the world need this? the *Engliſh* in particular?—*Si not inſaniunt ſatis ſua ſponte, inſtiga.*

LETTER 10. P. 246. "Thoſe treaſures which ſpring from the imputation of *Chriſt's righteouſneſs*." Not a word of his *atoning blood?* Why do ſo many men love to ſpeak of his righteouſneſs, rather than his atonement? I fear, becauſe it affords a fairer excuſe for their own unrighteouſneſs. To cut off this, is it not better to mention both together? at leaſt never to name the former without the latter?

P. 261. "FAITH is a perſuaſion that *Chriſt* has ſhed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs *in my ſtead*." I can by no means ſubſcribe to this definition. There are hundreds, yea thouſands of true believers, who never once thought, one way or the other, of *Chriſt*'s fulfilling all righteouſneſs *in their ſtead*. I perſonally know many who to this very hour have no idea of it; and yet have each of them a divine evidence and conviction, *Chriſt loved me, and gave himſelf for me*. This is St *Paul*'s account of faith: and it is ſufficient. He that *thus* believes, is juſtified.

P. 263. "IT is a *ſure* means of purifying the heart, and *never fails* to work by love." It *ſurely* purifies the heart—if we *abide in it;* but not if we *draw back to perdition*. It *never fails* to work by love, while it continues; but if itſelf fail, farewell both love and good works.

"FAITH is the hand which receives all that is laid up in *Chriſt*." Conſequently, if we *make ſhipwreck of*

the

the faith, how much ſo ever is laid up in *Chriſt*, from that hour we receive nothing.

LETTER II. P. 265. "FAITH in *the imputed righteouſneſs* of *Chriſt*, is a fundamental principle in the goſpel." If ſo, what becomes of all thoſe who think nothing about *imputed righteouſneſs?* How many who are full of faith and love, if this is true, muſt periſh everlaſtingly?

P. 276. "Thy hands muſt urge the way of the deadly weapon, through the ſhivering fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart." Are not theſe deſcriptions far too ſtrong? May they not occaſion unprofitable reaſonings in many readers?

Ne puerum coram populam Medea trucidet.

Ibid. "How can he *juſtify* it to the world?" Not at all. Can this then *juſtify his faith* to the world?

P. 285. "YOU take the certain way to obtain comfort; the righteouſneſs of *Jeſus Chriſt*." What, without the atonement? Strange fondneſs for an unſcriptural, dangerous *mode of expreſſion!*

P. 286. "So the merits of *Chriſt* are derived to all the faithful." Rather the fruits of the Spirit: which are likewiſe plainly typified by the oil in *Zecharia*'s viſion.

P. 291. "HAS the law any demand? It muſt go to him for ſatisfaction. Suppoſe, "Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf." Then *I* am not obliged to love my neighbour. *Chriſt* has ſatisfied the demand of the law *for me*. Is not this the very quinteſſence of Antinomianiſm?

P. 292. "THE righteouſneſs wrought out by *Jeſus Chriſt*, is wrought out for *all his people*, to be *the cauſe* of *their* juſtification, and *the purchaſe* of their ſalvation. *The righteouſneſs* is the cauſe, the purchaſe." So the *death* of *Chriſt* is not ſo much as named! "For *all his* people." But what becomes of *all other people?* They *muſt inevitably* periſh for ever. The die was caſt,

or

or ever they were in being. The doctrine to *pass them by*, has

Consign'd their unborn souls to hell,
And damn'd them from their mother's womb!

I could sooner be a Turk, a Deist, yea an Atheist, than I could believe this. It is less absurd to deny the very being of GOD, than to make him an almighty tyrant.

P. 300. "THE whole world and all its seasons, are rich with our Creator's goodness. His tender mercies are over all his works." Are they over the bulk of mankind? Where is his goodness to the non-elect? How are his tender mercies over *them?* "His temporal blessings are given *to them*." But are they to them blessings at all? Are they not all curses? Does not GOD *know* they are? that they will only increase their damnation? Does not he *design* they should? And this you call *goodness!* this is *tender mercy!*

P. 303. "MAY we not discern pregnant proofs of goodness, in each individual object?" No; on your scheme, not a spark of it, in this world or the next, to the far greater part of the work of his own hands!

P. 317, 18. "Is GOD a generous benefactor to the meanest animals, to the lowest reptiles? And will he deny my friend what is necessary to his present comfort, and his final acceptance?" Yea, will he deny it to any soul that he has made? Would you deny it to any, if it were in your power?

But if you *lov'd* whom GOD abhorr'd,
The servant were above his LORD.

P. 321. THE *wedding-garment* here means holiness.

P. 324. "THIS is his tender complaint, They *will not come* unto me!" Nay, that is not the case; they *cannot*. He himself has *decreed*, not to give them that grace without which their coming is impossible!

P. 325. "THE grand end which GOD proposes in all his favourable dispensations to fallen man, is to

demonſtrate the ſovereignty of his grace." Not ſo: to impart happineſs to his creatures, is his grand end herein. "Barely to demonſtrate his ſovereignty," is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not the moſt high GOD.

P. 326. "GOD hath pleaſure in the proſperity of his ſervants. He is a boundleſs ocean of good." Nay, that ocean is far from boundleſs, if it wholly paſſes by nine-tenths of mankind.

P. 327. "YOU cannot ſuppoſe GOD would enter into a freſh covenant with a rebel." I both ſuppoſe and know he did. "GOD made the new covenant with *Chriſt*, and charged him with the performance of the conditions." I deny both theſe aſſertions, which are the central point wherein Calviniſm and Antinomianiſm meet. "*I have made a covenant with my choſen.*" —Namely, with *David my ſervant*. So GOD himſelf explains it.

P. 351. "HE will waſh you in the blood which atones, and inveſt you with the righteouſneſs which juſtifies." Why ſhould you thus continually put aſunder what GOD has joined?

P. 463. "GOD himſelf at the laſt day pronounces them righteous, becauſe they are intereſted in the obedience of the Redeemer." Rather, becauſe they are waſhed in his blood, and renewed by his Spirit.

UPON the whole, I cannot but wiſh, that the plan of theſe dialogues had been executed in a different manner. Moſt of the grand truths of Chriſtianity are herein both explained and proved with great ſtrength and clearneſs. Why was any thing intermixed, which could prevent any ſerious Chriſtian's recommending them to all mankind? any thing which muſt neceſſarily render them exceptionable, to ſo many thouſands of the children of GOD? In practical writings I ſtudiouſly abſtain from the very ſhadow of controverſy. Nay, even in controverſial, I do not knowingly write one line, to which any but my opponent would object. For

opinions

opinions ſhall I deſtroy the work of GOD? then am I a bigot indeed. Much more, if I would not drop any *mode of expreſſion*, rather than offend either Jew or Gentile, or the church of GOD. I am,

With great ſincerity,
Dear Sir,
Your affectionate brother and ſervant,
J. W.

I have but one thing more to add, which is, concerning the *ſeaſonableneſs* of the following publication. It may, perhaps, be thought a needleſs revival of a diſpute, which happened long ago, and which is now probably forgotten. In anſwer to which, I can aſſure the reader, that the above is printed from an edition of the *Preſervative*, now on ſale at the *Foundery*. The *ſeaſonableneſs* of this publication is therefore apparent; for though my brother died *December* 25. 1758, the controverſy did by no means die with him, but ſtill ſubſiſts in the daily publication and ſale of the *Preſervative*, which alſo comes with a ſpecial * recommendation from Mr *Weſley*, into the hands of all his preachers, to be by them firſt "*carefully read, then to be recommended and explained to the ſeveral ſocieties where they labour.*" So that the controverſy is, in the moſt effectual manner, daily and hourly kept alive by Mr *Weſley* himſelf. This proves very ſufficiently the *ſeaſonableneſs*, and, as things have happened, the *expediency*, of the preſent appearance of the following letters in public. How pertinent an anſwer they contain to Mr *Weſley*'s objections, is now to be left to the conſideration of the candid reader.

Miles's-Lane,
December 5. 1764. W. HERVEY.

* See the laſt paragraph of a tract, entitled, *Reaſons againſt a ſeparation from the church of* England. Printed alſo in the *Preſervative*, p. 237.

LETTERS

TO THE

Reverend Mr JOHN WESLEY.

LETTER I.

REV. SIR,

I RECEIVED the letter you mention, containing remarks on the dialogues between *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. As, after a careful peruſal, I ſaw very little reaſon to alter my ſentiments, I laid aſide your epiſtle without returning an anſwer, in hopes that my ſilence (which it ſeems you miſtook for obſtinacy) would moſt emphatically ſpeak my advice; which, had it been expreſſed more plainly, would have been delivered in the apoſtle's words, *That ye ſtudy*, or make it your ambition, *to be quiet* *.

Since you have, by printing theſe remarks, ſummoned me, though reluctant, to the bar of the Public, it ſhould ſeem, that I ought not to diſcredit *the truth*

* 1 Theſſ. iv. 11. Φιλοτιμεισθαι, a beautiful word, rich with meaning, and not adequately tranſlated by *Make it your ambition*, ſtill more inadequately by our common verſion.

truth once delivered to the saints, by a timid silence; and I am the more willing to answer for myself, as I have now the privilege of an unprejudised judge, and an impartial jury.—If my defence should be lost on my opponent, it may possibly make some useful impressions on the court, and candid audience. However, I will not absolutely despair of convincing Mr *Wesley* himself, because it is written, *Give admonition to a wise man, and he will yet be wiser* *. On some very momentous and interesting points, I may probably be a little more copious than the strict laws of argument demand, in order to exhibit some of the great truths of the gospel, in so *clear* a light, that *he may run who readeth them*; in so *amiable* and *inviting* a light, that the believer may rejoice in them, and the sinner may long for them. For such digressions, I promise myself an easy pardon, both from yourself and the reader.

Thus you open the debate; "In the second dialogue, is not the description often too laboured, the "language too stiff and affected?" I must confess, Sir, this animadversion seems to be as just, as the praise which you have here and elsewhere bestowed, appears to be lavish: the former, if not more pleasing, may be no less serviceable than the latter. For both I acknowledge myself your debtor; and if ever I attempt any thing more in the capacity of an author, I will be sure to keep my eye fixed on the caution you have given.

I am sorry that the next words bring on a complaint, so close to my acknowledgment. "You cite the pages "according to the *Dublin* edition, having wrote the "rough draught of what follows in *Ireland*." But should you not, in complaisance to your readers on this side the water, have referred to the pages of the *English* edition? For want of such reference, there is hardly

* Prov. ix. 9. The original phrase is only in *Give*, which may signify, *Give admonition*, as well as (what our version has supposed) *instruction*,

hardly distinction enough, in some places, to know which are your words, and which are *Aspasio*'s.—Should you not also, in justice to the author, before you transcribed the rough draught for the press, have consulted the *last* edition of his work? Which you well knew was not the copy, from which the *Irish* impression was taken, yet might reasonably suppose to be the least inaccurate.

When I read your next paragraph, I am struck with reverence, I am ashamed and almost astonished, at the littleness of the preceding observations. Stiffness of style, and a thousand such trifles, what are they all compared with *justification* before the infinite and immortal GOD? This is a subject that commands our most awful regard, a blessing that should engage our whole attention. As this is the grand article to come under our consideration, I would desire to maintain an incessant dependence on the divine SPIRIT, that my thoughts may be influenced, and my pen guided by the wisdom which cometh from above; that I may neither pervert the truth, by any erroneous representations, nor dishonour it by an unchristian temper. It would be easy to make use of bitter satire, and disdainful irony, the contemptuous sneer, or the indignant frown.—And indeed, Sir, you have laid yourself open to every attack of this kind: but these are not the weapons of a Christian's warfare.

— — *Non defensoribus istis.*

We are to give a reason of the hope that is in us, *with meekness and fear; meekness*, with regard to those who interrogate or oppose us; *fear*, with regard to HIM, whose cause we plead, and whose eye is ever upon us. "Is justification," you say, "more or less, "than GOD's pardoning and accepting a sinner, thro' "the merits of *CHRIST?*" I somewhat wonder, Sir, that you should ask this question, when it is professedly answered by *Aspasio*, who has presented you with a very

very circumſtantial definition of juſtification, explaining it, eſtabliſhing it, and obviating ſeveral objections advanced againſt it. If you would animadvert with ſpirit and force, or indeed to any conſiderable purpoſe, ſhould you not lay open the impropriety of this definition, ſhewing from reaſon and ſcripture, that it is neither accurate nor orthodox?

At pages 61. 62. the reader may ſee *Aſpaſio*'s account of juſtification, and find the words imputation and righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, particularly explained: the latter denoting, "all the various inſtances of his "active and paſſive obedience;" accordingly it is affirmed (page 62.) "The puniſhment we deſerved, "he endures; the obedience which we owed, he ful-"fils."—What *Aſpaſio* here profeſſes to underſtand by the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, the reader is particularly requeſted to bear in his memory, that he be not miſled by Mr *Weſley*, who often forgets it, and complains when the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* is mentioned, that his penal ſufferings are quite omitted. I would not wiſh, Sir, to have a plainer proof, that you do not diſcard the active, than *Aſpaſio* has hereby given, that he never excludes the paſſive.

By your queſtion, you hint a diſlike, yet without informing us what it is, or wherein *Aſpaſio*'s illuſtrations and proofs are deficient. You propoſe, and *only* propoſe, another definition. Well then, to differ from you as little as poſſible, nay, to agree with you, as far as truth will permit, ſince you are ſo loath to admit of our repreſentation, we will accede to yours; eſpecially if it be ſomewhat explained, and a little improved. For indeed the words, in their preſent form, are rather too vague to conſtitute any definition. *Pardoning* and *accepting* may happen to be only diverſified expreſſions of the ſame idea. The *merits of CHRIST* will certainly comport, either with *Popiſh* or *Socinian* notions. It abounds in writers of the former ſort, and it is to be found in the latter. Therefore, to be

more

more explicit,—by *pardoning*, I mean, GOD's acquitting a ſinner from guilt of every kind, and of every degree. By *accepting*, I mean ſtill more, GOD's receiving him into full favour, conſidering and treating him as righteous, yea perfectly and glorioufly righteous.—By the *merits of CHRIST*, I would always be ſuppoſed to ſignify, his active and paſſive obedience, all that he wrought, and all that he ſuffered, for the ſalvation of mankind *. Intereſted in all this, the believer enters into the divine preſence, and ſtands before the divine MAJESTY.—Not like *David*'s ambaſſadors, ſtealing themſelves into *Jericho*; ſafe indeed, but with the marks of *Ammoni tiſh* inſults on their perſons: he rather enters like that illuſtrious exile, *Joſeph*, into the preſence of *Pharaoh*, when his priſon-garments were taken from him, and he was arrayed in *veſtures of fine linen*, meet for the ſhoulders of thoſe who appear before kings. With this explication I am content that *your* definition take place of mine †. I would farther obſerve, that you have dropt the word *imputed*, which inclines me to ſuſpect, you would caſhier the thing. But let me aſk, Sir, how can we be juſtified

* The *merits of CHRIST* is certainly an ambiguous phraſe, and what I can by no means admire; but as it occurs in Mr *Weſley*'s letter, and in many valuable writers, I have, led by their example, uſed it in the following debate, ſtill underſtanding it, and ſtill uſing it, in the ſenſe explained above.

† To gratify Mr *Weſley*, I have admitted his phraſe, "the "*merits of CHRIST*," though, as it is a phraſe of dubious import, and what almoſt any ſect or hereſy will ſubſcribe, I ſhould much ſooner chuſe to abide by *Aſpaſio*'s language. And why ſhould we not all ſpeak with the ſcriptures? Why ſhould we not uſe the expreſſions of the apoſtle? He ſays, *juſtified by the blood of CHRIST*; he ſays, made righteous *by the obedience of CHRIST*. When therefore we ſay, Sinners are pardoned and accepted through the blood, and through the obedience of *CHRIST*, we have a warrant for our doctrine, which is indiſputable; and a precedent for our language, which is unexceptionable.

juſtified by the merits of *CHRIST*, unleſs they are imputed to us? Would the payment made by a ſurety, procure a diſcharge for the debtor, unleſs it was placed to his account? It is certain, the ſacrifices of old could not make an atonement, unleſs they were imputed to each offerer reſpectively. This was an ordinance ſettled by JEHOVAH himſelf *. And were not the ſacrifices, was not their imputation typical of *CHRIST*, and things pertaining to *CHRIST*? the former prefiguring his all-ſufficient expiation, the latter ſhadowing forth the way whereby we are partakers of its efficacy. The righteouſneſs (not the righteouſneſs and obedience, *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks otherwiſe) which *CHRIST* performed is reckoned by GOD as our own. This you call an ambiguous expreſſion; but, if conſidered in conjunction with the foregoing and following enlargements, I ſhould think it can hardly deſerve the charge. *Aſpaſio* all along labours to be underſtood. In this place he more fully opens his meaning, by giving another view of the nature, and by ſpecifying the effects of imputation. The *nature*, —it being the ſame as placing to our account ſomething not our own †. The *effects*,—*CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, thus placed to our account, being as effectual for obtaining our ſalvation, as if it was our own perſonal qualification ‡. To the latter you expreſſly agree, to the former you make no objection: to the whole doctrine, thus explained, you elſewhere declare your aſſent.

If in all this we may depend upon you, Sir, muſt we

* *Lev.* vii. 18. *If any of the fleſh of the ſacrifice of his peace-offerings be eaten at all on the third day, it ſhall not be accepted, neither ſhall it be imputed unto him that offereth it.* It ſhall not be *accepted*. Why? for this reaſon, becauſe it ſhall not be *imputed*. A plain indication, that the latter is the cauſe of the former. That without *imputation*, whether it be of the typical or real ſacrifice, the blood of the beaſt, or the death of *CHRIST*, there is no acceptance.

† *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, p. 61. ‡ Ibid. p. 64.

we not feel an alarming ſhock at your adjuration in the next paragraph?

"For *CHRIST*'s ſake do not." What? ſurely nothing leſs can excite or juſtify this vehement exclamation, but the obtruſion of ſome doctrine, that is moſt glaringly falſe and abſolutely damnable. Shall we have ſuch a ſolemn firing, ſuch a thunder of exploſion, only to ſilence a particular phraſe? In another perſon this would look like profane levity; in Mr *Weſley*, the ſofteſt appellation we can give it, is idle pomp.—All this clamour merely againſt words! words too, the explication of which, and the doctrine contained in them, yourſelf allow. Dear Sir, what is a word or a phraſe? Can it do either good or harm, but as conveying right or wrong ſentiments? Will the mere pronouncing or hearing of a word (be it *abbracadabra*, or *higgajon ſelah*, or *imputed*) without its idea, poiſon the principles of men, and induce them to work *all uncleanneſs with greedineſs?* As you have been firing without an enemy, (*Aſpaſio* is owned for an ally,) ſo you ſeem to be triumphing without a victory. *Aſpaſio*'s charity for thoſe who are diſguſted at the expreſſion, and have no explicit knowledge of the doctrine, is guarded by the words immediately following—"yet live under the belief of the truth, "and in the exerciſe of the duty," as well as by the annexed deſcription of the perſons, and their temper; who are far enough from fancying, that if they may but be pardoned for the ſake of *CHRIST*, they can obtain the divine favour, and a title to future happineſs, by their own good behaviour. Hence it will appear, that he has been too cautious, to part with the very thing for which he is contending. And this is more abundantly evident from the cloſe of his charitable paragraph, wherein, though he allows ſuch people to be ſafe; yet he laments their embarraſs, and their deficiency in light, ſtrength, and conſolation. "The phraſe is not ſcriptural." Suppoſe it were not,

this would afford but a ſlight reaſon, for ſo paſſionate an outcry: however, this is certain, St *Paul* uſes the phraſe, *GOD imputeth* †, and *that righteouſneſs might be imputed* ‡. Now, is it poſſible, that there ſhould be righteouſneſs imputed, yet not an imputed righteouſneſs? To aſſert this muſt argue either a wonderful ſubtil refinement, or an exceeding ſtrong prejudice. "It is not neceſſary."—Perhaps ſo. But is it not neceſſary Mr *Weſley* ſhould either inform us, what ſenſe of the phraſe it is, which he apprehends ſo likely to miſlead men, or elſe, inſtead of exclaiming againſt *Aſpaſio*, ſhould join all his force with him, in defending that ſenſe which they both eſpouſe? "It has "done immenſe hurt."—When we are made ſenſible of the immenſe, or indeed of any real, hurt done by the phraſe, *imputed;* when we ſee thoſe who diſlike it, cordially warm for the ſentiment expreſſed in other words, we will then conſent to reſign it for its equivalent, *reckoned as our own,—placed to our account,—as effectual as if our own perſonal qualification.* Till then we muſt guard the caſket for the ſake of the jewel. We prefer the word *imputed*, becauſe it ſays more at once, than any other term we know; and becauſe we are aware of a common practice uſed in all ages, by the oppoſers of ſound doctrine. They pretend a zeal only againſt the phraſe, that by bringing *this* into diſuſe, they may cauſe *that* to be forgotten. Shall we not then diſpute for *imputed* righteouſneſs? Yes, Sir, we muſt diſpute, both for the doctrine and for the phraſe, ſince there are perſons who openly ſtrike at the one, and we fear with a view to ſupplant the other. Shall we not diſpute for *imputed* righteouſneſs,—tho' the words are a grand peculiarity of the ſcriptures, and the thing the very ſpirit and eſſence of the goſpel? Not diſpute for that which is better to us ſinners than all worlds, better than our hearts could wiſh, or our thoughts conceive; which in ſhort is the beſt, the noble-

† Rom. iv. 6. ‡ Rom. iv. 11.

bleſt, the completeſt gift, that GOD himſelf can beſtow.

When ſuch a gift, and ſuch a righteouſneſs is the ſubject of diſputation, we muſt not give place, no, *not for an hour;* we muſt maintain its matchleſs excellency, ſo long as we have any breath, or any being. We muſt ſay, in direct oppoſition to your fervent but unadviſed zeal, "*For* CHRIST's *ſake*," let us contend earneſtly for imputed righteouſneſs; becauſe it is the brighteſt jewel in his mediatorial crown. "*For the ſake of immortal ſouls*," let us hold faſt and hold forth this precious truth; becauſe it yields the ſtrongeſt conſolation to the guilty conſcience, and furniſhes the moſt endearing, as well as the moſt prevailing inducement to univerſal obedience.

"To aſcribe pardon to *CHRIST*'s *paſſive*, eternal "life to his *active* obedience, is fanciful rather than "judicious." The remark is juſt; not ſo the quotation; *Aſpaſio* is ſomewhat disfigured by your diſtortion of his features; he limps a little, by your diſlocation of a limb There is, in his language, guard enough to check every attempt, either to diſſolve the union, or ſever the coagency, of the different parts of our LORD's righteouſneſs.

But let us give *Aſpaſio* a fair hearing. Thus he expreſſes himſelf, "To divide them (the *active* and *paſſive* "righteouſneſs) into detached portions, independent "on each other, ſeems to be fanciful rather than judi- "cious. To divide into detached portions, is more than to diſtinguiſh between the one and the other. The latter *Aſpaſio* practiſes, the former he diſavows. "Independent of each other,"—do theſe words ſtand for nothing? Have they no meaning, that here you ſhew them no regard, and never recollect them throughout your whole epiſtle? Had you honoured them with any degree of notice, ſeveral of your objections muſt have been precluded; and if the more candid reader pleaſes to bear them in memory, ſeveral of your objections

objections will, at the very firſt view, fall to the ground. Beſides, the perſon who tells us, the caſe *ſeems* to be ſo, is not ſo peremptory, as he who roundly affirms it to *be* ſo; the former is all that *Aſpaſio* has advanced. Though I am willing that you ſhould correct his ſtyle, yet I muſt beg of you, Sir, not to make him quite ſo poſitive; let him have the ſatisfaction of being modeſt, even where he has the misfortune, in your opinion at leaſt, to be erroneous.

"*CHRIST's* univerſal obedience from his birth "to his death, is the one foundation of my hope," ſays *Aſpaſio*. To which you aſſent, and with a laudable vehemence, reply, "This is unqueſtionably "right." I wiſh, Sir, you would ponder your words before you ſpeak, at leaſt before you print, that there may be ſomething fixed and certain, on which *we* may depend, and by which *you* will abide. One would think, after this acknowledgment, pronounced with ſuch an air of ſolemnity, you could never ſo far forget yourſelf, as to open your mouth againſt the obedience, the univerſal obedience of *CHRIST*, which ſurely muſt include both what he *wrought*, and what he *ſuffered*. You confeſs it to be your *foundation*,—the foundation of your *hope*, the *only* foundation of your hope; can you then, without the moſt amazing inconſiſtency, either wiſh to ſecrete the doctrine, or offer to diſcountenance the expreſſion?

"There is no manner of need to make the impu-"tation of *CHRIST's* active righteouſneſs a ſeparate "head of diſcourſe."—No manner of need, even tho' you declare, that this active righteouſneſs, together with the expiatory death, is the only foundation of your hope! Can you think it poſſible to treat of *ſuch* a topic too particularly, too diſtinctly, too minutely?—*Aſpaſio* has ſhewn the need, or aſſigned the reaſon for this method of handling the ſubject; becauſe it ſets the fulneſs of our LORD's merits in the cleareſt light, and gives the completeſt honour to GOD's holy law.

law. Have you alledged any thing to disprove, or so much as to invalidate his plea? Ought not this to have been done before your assertion can be valid, or even decent?

Besides, are there not persons in the world, who fondly imagine, that if they can but have pardon thro' *CHRIST*, they shall by their own doings secure eternal life? When such persons are in danger of overlooking the active obedience of the REDEEMER, why should you not for their sakes allow us to make the imputation of his righteousness "a separate head "of discourse?" That, seeing the transcendent perfection of *CHRIST*'s work, they may cease from confiding in their own *; lest it be said to them another day, *I will declare thy righteousness, and thy works, that* for the grand purpose of justification *they shall not profit thee* †.

We must therefore take leave to dwell upon the active righteousness of our LORD; we must display its perfection, in opposition to all the vain pretensions of human qualifications, endeavours, or attainments; we must demonstrate, that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so is this divine obedience higher than all the works of the children of men; yea, so transcendent in itself, and absolutely perfect, as to be incapable of any augmentation. All the good deeds of all the saints, could they be added to it, would not increase in any degree its justifying efficacy; it is like all the other works of GOD, concerning which we are told, *nothing can be added to them.* This brings to my remembrance a most beautiful and sublime representation, which you must have read in the evangelical prophet; *Every valley shall be exalted, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough places plain, and the glory of the LORD shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.* Here mountains are de-

* Heb. iv. 10. † Is. lvii. 12.

demoliſhed, valleys are elevated, and the earth is levelled into a ſpacious plain, on purpoſe to accompliſh what Mr *Weſley* ſuppoſes unneceſſary; on purpoſe to give the moſt clear, full, ſtriking view of the great REDEEMER, of his wonderful perſon, and glorious work, that he alone may be diſtinguiſhed and exalted; may walk majeſtic and conſpicuous thro' the midſt of mankind, as being ſingly and completely ſufficient for the recovery of ſinners. That all fleſh, not Jews only, but Gentiles alſo; not men of reputation only, but the meaneſt of mortals, the moſt infamous of wretches, may together ſee his glory, may on equal ground, without any pre-eminence of one above another contemplate and partake of his precious death and perfect righteouſneſs, which are the one object of divine complacency, and the ſovereign glory of the LORD REDEEMER. According to the import of this magnificent piece of imagery, all the differences that ſubſiſt between one man and another are aboliſhed; nothing but *CHRIST* and his complete work are propoſed, as the cauſe of juſtification and the ground of hope. Faith beholds nothing but the divine *JESUS;* it never inquires, What have I done? what have I ſuffered? but what has that moſt illuſtrious perſonage done, and what ſuffered? What has JEHOVAH manifeſted in our nature, *wrought* for the benefit and redemption of ſinners?—Faith is never weary of viewing or reviewing either the active or paſſive obedience of *IMMANUEL.* Faith will declare, that neither of theſe points can be ſet forth in too ſtrong or too recommending a light. Faith is ever deſiring to ſee more and more of the SAVIOUR's worthineſs, that the ſoul may rejoice in his excellency, and be filled with all his fulneſs.

May you, dear Sir, abound in this faith, and live under ſuch views of GOD our SAVIOUR; then I flatter myſelf you will be diſſatisfied with your preſent

ſent opinion, and not be diſguſted at the freedom of ſpeech, uſed by

Your's, *&c.*

LETTER II.

Rev. Sir,

I Am particularly pleaſed at my entrance on this epiſtle, becauſe it preſents me with a view of Mr *Weſley* in very good humour. Inſtead of rebuking, he commends. He puts off the frown of cenſure, for the ſmile of approbation. I hope to follow the amiable example; to approve and applaud, whereever opportunity offers, and truth permits. And though I ſhall be ſometimes obliged to oppoſe or refute; yet I ſhall do both with all the tenderneſs and lenity, which may conſiſt with a proper vindication of the truth.

" The third and fourth dialogues contain an admi-
" rable illuſtration and confirmation of the great doc-
" trine of *CHRIST*'s ſatisfaction.—This is generouſly acknowledged. Yet even here it ſo unhappily falls out, that complaiſance gets the ſtart of judgment. Did you advert, Sir, to the ſtate of the controverſy, or ſee the conſequence of *Aſpaſio*'s arguing, you muſt either give up a favourite tenet, or elſe diſſent from his doctrine.

Aſpaſio maintains, that *CHRIST*'s ſufferings were puniſhment; real, proper puniſhment. Now could *CHRIST*, an innocent perſon, be puniſhed, without bearing ſin; the very ſin of others? Could *CHRIST*, a divine perſon, bear the ſin of others, and not do it perfectly away! Or can they, whoſe guilt was puniſhed in *CHRIST*, and whoſe ſin is perfectly done away by *CHRIST*, can they periſh eternally? But I forbear. Yourſelf, and the judicious reader will eaſily

apprehend my meaning, and discern the point, to which these questions lead. All the benefit I propose by this remark, is, to convince Mr *Wesley*, that he is not incapable of a mistake;—that he has tripped a little, in what he *commends*, and therefore may possibly make a false step, in what he *condemns*.

Unless I may be allowed to propose this additional advantage, the rectifying an impropriety in some people's apprehensions, concerning our LORD's vicarious sufferings. It is usual to say, "He bore the punish-"ment, not the guilt; the penalty, not the fault." Which seems to be a distinction more scrupulous than judicious; answers no other end, but that of derogating from our REDEEMER's grace, and weakening the foundation of our hopes.

The guilt of sin, I take to be what the apostle calls, ανομια, the transgression of the law. From hence arises the obligation to punishment. This guilt our LORD *so truly* bore, that he was no less liable to the arrest of justice, and the infliction of vengeance, than if he himself had committed the most enormous crimes.—*He bare*, says the HOLY GHOST, *the sin of many*. But punishment cannot be reckoned the same as sin, any more than wages can be accounted the same as work. If then our LORD bore sin itself, he must bear every thing criminal, that is included in it; no circumstance of demerit or aggravation excepted.

He bore the *fault*, therefore he makes us without fault in the sight of GOD; and will present us faultless before the throne, with exceeding joy.—He bore the *guilt;*—therefore our LORD's sufferings were real punishment, justly inflicted by the supreme JUDGE, and, on principles of justice, discharge us from all punishment whatever. He bore the *filth;*—therefore he felt, what those wretched souls endure, who die in their iniquities; his eternal FATHER forsook him, and hid his face from him as from an abominable object.

This

This renders our SAVIOUR's propitiation great, wonderful, glorious. Seeing this, believing this, we have nothing to fear. Conscience is satisfied, and the accuser of the brethren is silenced. Nothing can be laid to our charge by the righteous law, and nothing remains to awaken the indignation of the righteous JUDGE.—Whereas, if this was not done, we have reason to be terribly apprehensive. If *CHRIST* bore not the guilt, then sinners must bear it in their own persons; if he took not away the filth, then it must lye on transgressors, and render them loathsome for ever. If the fault was not transferred to him, then it must abide upon us, and be our everlasting ruin.

Neither does this doctrine in any degree detract from our SAVIOUR's dignity. It rather gives him the honour due unto his name, *JESUS*. As in the scales of a balance, the lower the one descends, the higher the other mounts; so the deeper our MEDIATOR's humiliation sinks, to the more exalted height does his glory rise. The more horrible the condition to which he submitted, the more illustriously his goodness shines, and the more clearly the perfection of his work appears.

Satisfaction was made to the divine law, says *Aspasio*. "I do not remember any such expression in "scripture," replies Mr *Wesley*.—But do you not remember this expression in the epistle to the *Galatians*, *CHRIST was made under the law* *? Why was he made under the law, but to fulfil its precepts, and undergo its penalty? and is not this a satisfaction to its demands?

The

* *Gal.* iv. 4. There is, I think, something uncouth in this expression, *made under the law*. Γενομενος 'tis true very well comports with both the clauses, εκ γυναικος & υπο νομον. But in the *English* translation, the participle might, not ungracefully, be varied, perhaps in some such manner; The *Son of GOD was made of a woman*, and *became subject to the law*.

The truth is, the divine law was violated by our ſins. It was abſolutely impoſſible for us to make any reparation; therefore *CHRIST* in our nature and in our ſtead ſubmitted to its obligations, that he might magnify its injured authority, and render it in the higheſt degree venerable; might make even its tremendous ſanctions and rigorous requirements, the very baſis of grace, mercy, and peace.—Divinely-noble contrivance! unſpeakably-precious expedient! By this means, vengeance and forbearance have met together; wrath and love have kiſſed each other, in the redemption of ſinners. The law ſays, I am fulfilled. Juſtice ſays, I am ſatisfied. While both concur to expedite and aſcertain the ſalvation of a believer.

"This way of ſpeaking of the law, as a perſon "injured, and to be ſatisfied, ſeems hardly defen-"ſible." Does not the apoſtle ſpeak of the law as a perſon? a perſon that *liveth* *, to whom ſome are *married*, and to whom others are *dead*? *Aſpaſio* will always think himſelf, and his manner of ſpeaking, ſufficiently defenſible, ſo long as he has the apoſtolical practice for his precedent.

Having ſuch a precedent, he wants no other; otherwiſe he might plead the authority of Mr *John Weſley*; who, in his explanatory notes on the *New Teſtament*, ſays, "The law is here ſpoken of (by a "common figure) as a *perſon*, to which as to an "huſband, life and death are aſcribed †." And if the law be an huſband, may not an huſband be *injured*? may not an injured huſband inſiſt upon being ſatisfied?

"All the benefits of the new covenant are the pur-"chaſe of *CHRIST*'s blood;" this is *Aſpaſio*'s belief. To this you aſſent, "*Surely they are.*"—With pleaſure

* *Rom.* vii. 1, 4. The word ζᾷ at the end of the firſt verſe is ſpoken of the *law*, not of the *man*, as Mr *Weſley* and others have very juſtly obſerved. It ſhould therefore be tranſlated not *he*, but *it*.

† See Explan. Notes, *Rom.* vii. 1.

pleaſure I ſhould receive your ſuffrage, was I not afraid that this is your meaning; they are *ſo* the purchaſe of his blood, as not to have any dependence on, or any connection with, his moſt perfect obedience. I was alarmed by the cloſe of your laſt paragraph, and my ſuſpicions are increaſed by the following negative interrogation; "After this has been fully proved, where is the need, where is the uſe of contending ſo ſtrenuouſly, for the imputation of his righteouſneſs?"

Aſpaſio has informed you, Sir, in the ſecond dialogue. He has there ſhewn the advantage of unfolding, circumſtantially and copiouſly, this momentous truth.—To give you farther ſatisfaction, he has quoted the words of an eminent divine, of which the following are a part,—Whoever rejects the doctrine of the imputation of our SAVIOUR's righteouſneſs to man, does, by ſo doing, reject the imputation of man's ſin to our SAVIOUR, and all the conſequences of it."—If you are not ſatisfied with Mr *Stynoe*'s reaſons, you are remitted to St *Paul*. In *Rom.* v. (a chapter of diſtinguiſhed dignity and importance) he teaches mankind, that *CHRIST died* for the ungodly; that we are juſtified thro' his *blood*, are ſaved from wrath by his *death*. After all this had been fully proved, where was the need, where was the uſe of inſiſting largely upon that obedience of ONE, by which many are made * righteous? or upon that righteouſneſs of ONE, which is imputed to many for juſtification of life? Yet this the inſpired writer evidently does.

Anſwer the foregoing queſtion, in behalf of the apoſtle, and you will anſwer it in behalf of *Aſpaſio*; or if you decline the office, give me leave, Sir, to anſwer it on behalf of them both. The blood of CHRIST is never conſidered as independent on, or detached from, the righteouſneſs of CHRIST. They united their bleſſed efficacy in accompliſhing the work of our redemption;

* Rom. v. 19.

redemption; we always look upon them as a grand and glorious aggregate, in their agency inſeparable, though in meditation diſtinguiſhable. Being thus diſtinguiſhable, at proper times, we meditate upon each diſtinctly. We diſplay each with all the particularity poſſible, and cannot but contend for the imputation of one, as well as of the other. The farther we dig into either of theſe ſpiritual mines, the greater fund of treaſures we diſcover. The more we glorify the SAVIOUR, the more we ſtrengthen faith, and the greater addition we make to our comfort, our peace, our joy.

Aſpaſio inquires, If CHRIST was our ſubſtitute as to penal ſuffering, why not as to juſtifying obedience? You reply,—"The former is expreſſly aſſerted "in ſcripture, the latter is not expreſſly *aſſerted* there." A ſmall inaccuracy here, Sir! the former is no more a ſcripture-expreſſion, than the latter; while the latter is no leſs the doctrine and ſenſe of ſcripture than the former.—A little piece of forgetfulneſs likewiſe! ſince you juſt now acknowledged, that "CHRIST's "univerſal obedience was the *one* foundation of your "hope." But how can his obedience be any foundation of your hope, if in this capacity he was not your ſubſtitute? Take away the circumſtance of ſubſtitution, and there is no more ground for your reliance on the obedience of CHRIST, than for your reliance on the obedience of *Gabriel*. *We are made the righteouſneſs of GOD*, becauſe we are *IN him*, as our proxy and our head; becauſe he wrought the juſtifying righteouſneſs, not only in our nature, but in our name, not only as our benefactor, but as our repreſentative.

"As ſin and miſery have abounded through the "firſt *Adam*, mercy and grace have much more a-"bounded through the ſecond. So that now none "have reaſon to complain." Here indeed we have *Aſpaſio*'s words, but in a patched and diſfigured condition. One part taken from page 181, and another wrenched from page 177. Let any one read the whole

whole of thoſe paſſages, and judge whether they can be fairly applied to the doctrines of election or predeſtination. Yet Mr *Weſley* is reſolved, at all adventures, with or without occaſion, to introduce theſe ſubjects of deep and perplexed diſputation. Therefore he replies, "No, not if the ſecond *Adam* died for all, "otherwiſe all for whom he did not die, have great "reaſon to complain."

Here, Sir, do you not force an inference from *Aſpaſio*'s words, foreign to his deſign? He is ſpeaking of thoſe who betake themſelves to *CHRIST*, and are recovered through his righteouſneſs. Such perſons he particularly mentions. Of ſuch alone he diſcourſes; without conſidering the caſe of others, who, deſpiſing or neglecting the REDEEMER, reject the counſel of GOD againſt themſelves.—Would it not be as edifying to the reader, and as agreeable to your office, if you ſhould join with *Aſpaſio* in diſplaying the free, ſuperabundant, infinitely-rich grace of our GOD; altogether as becoming this, as to divert his aim, and retard his ſteps, when he is preſſing forwards to this prize of our high calling in *CHRIST JESUS*?

Aſpaſio's words are, "When we betake ourſelves "to *CHRIST JESUS*, we ſhall find, that, as ſin "and miſery have abounded, *&c.*" Pleaſe to obſerve, Sir, how he limits his diſcourſe, conſequently is obliged to defend nothing, but what correſponds with ſuch limitation.

Had the *Iſraelites* any cauſe to be diſſatisfied with the proviſion made for their ſuſtenance and their cure, when the ſerpent of braſs was lifted up on the pole, and when the bread from heaven lay round about their tents? No more have ſinners any cauſe to think themſelves aggrieved, when the ſalvation of GOD is evidently ſet before them in the goſpel; is brought to their very door, in the preaching of the word, and they are allowed, importuned, commanded to receive it by faith. This is enough for me.

Enough

Enough this for any tranſgreſſors, who want, not to gratify curioſity, but to inherit life.—If they, or you, Sir, chuſe to pry further, and to intrude into the divine ſecrets, I muſt leave you to yourſelves; ſaying, as I depart, *The ſecret things belong unto the LORD our GOD; but thoſe things which are revealed, belong unto us and our children* *.

" The whole world of believers."—" This is an " expreſſion which never occurs in ſcripture."—It affords me a kind of preſumptive proof, that ſolid objections are not at hand, when ſuch ſhadows are liſted into the ſervice.—I ſhould be under no pain if you could prove your charge, beyond all contradiction. To what would it amount? Why, that *Aſpaſio*, having occaſion to mention a certain topic, happened not to make uſe of the very ſyllables and letters made uſe of in ſcripture. And do you or I, Sir, in all our ſermons, journals, preſervatives, and Chriſtian libraries, undertake to uſe none but ſcriptural expreſſions? Had we done this, one benefit might indeed have accrued to the public. It would conſiderably have reduced our volumes.—But I trifle as well as Mr *Weſley*. You proceed to enforce your remonſtrance, by adding,—" Neither has the expreſſion any countenance from ſcripture." I am really aſhamed to detain our readers any longer upon ſo trivial a point. Therefore what I am going to reply, is only a word to yourſelf. You, Sir, can tell who it is that affirms in a certain hymn;

For ev'ry man
'Tis finiſh'd, 'tis paſt—
The world is forgiv'n
For JESUS's ſake.

The world forgiven! What, all the world? every child of *Adam;* they who believe not on *CHRIST* and die in their ſins? This you cannot mean; this you dare not aſſert; this, I think, no mortal can ſuppoſe. You yourſelf

* Deut. xxix. 29.

yourſelf therefore, by "the world," muſt intend "the believing world;" and are you offended at *Aſpaſio* for commenting on your text? for expreſſing plainly what is implied in your own words?

In the LORD ſhall all the houſe of Iſrael be juſtified. This text *Aſpaſio* quotes, and acquieſces in the common verſion, upon which you animadvert. "It "ought unqueſtionably to be rendered *by* or *thro'* the "LORD." How hard is *Aſpaſio*'s lot! If he does not uſe the exact language of ſcripture, he is criminal at your bar, witneſs the preceding objection; if he does uſe the exact language of ſcripture, as in the preſent inſtance, you indite him for an erroneous tranſlation. So that it is next to impoſſible to eſcape your cenſure.

In the LORD, you affirm, is not the pure language of ſcripture, it is a wrong tranſlation, "and ought "*unqueſtionably* to be rendered *by* or *through* the "LORD." Yet *quiſquis adhuc uno partam colit aſſe Minervam*—Whoever has learned *Hebrew* no more than a month, will aſſure our *Engliſh* reader, that the prefix ב is the very firſt word in the Bible. Muſt it there be tranſlated *by* or *thro'* the beginning?—If our young ſcholar have only his pſalter, he can ſhew the ſame particle occurring three times within the firſt verſe. In *the counſel*—in *the way*—in *the ſeat*.—Twice in the ſecond verſe; *His delight is* in *the law*—in *his law will he exerciſe himſelf*. Three times more in the remainder of the pſalm, *ſhall bring forth fruit* in *his ſeaſon*—*ſhall not ſtand* in *judgment*. Neither in *the congregation of the righteous*.—Now let the *Engliſh* reader judge for himſelf, whether the *Hebrew* prefix muſt "*unqueſtionably* be rendered" in all theſe places "*by* or *through*." By or through his ſeaſon! by or through the congregation! But I ſtop, there is no need to apply all the paſſages. Neither is there any need of critical ſkill in languages, to determine concerning any *one* of them. Common ſenſe in this caſe is

ſufficiently qualified to be our critic and our arbitrator. —I only wiſh, Sir, you had produced the evidence for the corrected verſion. Then the public might have ſeen on which ſide the ballance were likely to turn; and which were the moſt cogent logic, "*Aſpaſio*'s doc- "trine is falſe, therefore the tranſlation is wrong; "or the tranſlation is fair, therefore his doctrine is "true."

By this time, I believe, the *unlearned reader* will begin to diſcern, what degree of credit is due to your criticiſms upon the original, and to your alteration of the common verſion, when they are ſupported by nothing more, than your bare aſſertion.—I alſo begin to be apprehenſive, that our canvaſſing the ſenſe of words, and ſifting the dead languages, will be no very agreeable entertainment to *any* reader. I will therefore for the future be more conciſe in the execution of this buſineſs; eſpecially as I have here given a ſpecimen of what might be done. I will try, if it is not poſſible, to animate what would otherwiſe be dull, and to blend godly edifying with critical diſquiſition.

Ye are complete in him. With this tranſlation alſo Mr *Weſley* finds fault. "The words literally rendered are, "Ye are filled with him."—I am ready to grant, that places may be found, where the prepoſition ἐν muſt be underſtood according to your ſenſe. But then every one knows that this is not the native, obvious, literal meaning; rather a meaning ſwayed, influenced, moulded by the preceding or following word. The literal ſignification of ἐν αὐτῷ is as we have rendered it. —Nor is there the leaſt occaſion to depart from the received interpretation; it is ſuitable to the context, and to the ſcope of the whole epiſtle.

However, we will ſuppoſe your criticiſm to be juſt. Does this deſtroy or enervate *Aſpaſio*'s argument? Would you have one meaning contradict or ſupplant the other? "Ye are filled *with* him, therefore ye are "not complete *in* him?" Does the former ſenſe in-

clud

clude or imply the latter? Can you, or I, or any one be filled with every requiſite for our recovery and happineſs, yet not be complete? It ſeems, therefore, you get nothing by this criticiſm, but the ſatisfaction of doing violence to the phraſe, without any improvement of the ſenſe, or any advantage to your cauſe.

"The whole paſſage (you affirm) relates to ſanctifi-
"cation, not to juſtification." Where is your proof, Sir? This we always expect. This Mr *Weſley* ſeldom, if ever, condeſcends to give. "Yes," he ſays, "any "unprejudiced reader may obſerve it." A ſtrange kind of proof! reducible to no figure in logic, unleſs there be a figure ſtyled *preſumption*. Was I to anſwer for the unprejudiced reader, I think he would obſerve the very reverſe. The words of the apoſtle are not a little forcible againſt your ſenſe of the paſſage, as will appear from the tranſitive adverb *alſo*. The next and the ſubſequent verſes, we allow, relate to ſanctification: if this verſe does the ſame, ſuch is the manner of the apoſtle's reaſoning, "In whom ye are "ſanctified, in whom alſo ye are ſanctified." Whereas, if the firſt clauſe denotes the juſtification of the *Coloſſian* converts thro' the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, if the following periods deſcribe their ſanctification, as a conſequence of this moſt happily operating privilege, then the reaſoning is juſt, and the tranſition graceful. "In him ye are completely juſtified, in him "alſo ye are truly ſanctified."

The whole paſſage is calculated to teach us, that *CHRIST* is the *fulneſs of our ſufficiency*. In him, and in him alone, there is enough to anſwer all the purpoſes of wiſdom, righteouſneſs, ſanctification, and redemption.—It is intended likewiſe to admoniſh us, that we ſhould reſt ſatisfied with him alone, in oppoſition to all the fond inventions of men; who would introduce ſomething elſe for the ground of our confidence, and the cauſe of our conſolation, as though it was ſaid;—

If indeed our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* had been an ordinary perſon, or merely a created being, ye might well be offended at my doctrine. Ye might then with ſome colour of reaſon ſeek to the maxims of philoſophy for wiſdom, or to the works of the law for righteouſneſs. But *CHRIST* is an immenſely-glorious perſon, for *in him are hid all the treaſures of wiſdom and knowledge.*—*CHRIST* is an incomparably-exalted ſovereign,—for *he is the head of all principalities and powers.*—Yea, *CHRIST* is the ſupreme incomprehenſible JEHOVAH; for *in him dwelleth all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD bodily.* Being therefore tranſplanted into him by faith, ye are complete. Partakers of him; ye have every bleſſing and all good. Thought cannot imagine, nor deſire crave, any thing farther, greater, higher.

Matchleſs privilege! exalted felicity! O may the knowledge, the experimental knowledge of it, fill our hearts, as *the waters cover* the abyſs of the *ſea!* Then will we ſing the hymn which once expreſſed your ſentiments, and ſtill expreſſes mine.

* "Join earth and heav'n to bleſs
"The LORD our righteouſneſs.
"The myſtery of redemption this,
"This the SAVIOUR's ſtrange deſign;

Man's

* See p. 56. of *Hymns and ſpiritual ſongs.* Anonymous indeed, but univerſally aſcribed to Mr *Weſley.* In theſe excellent lines, how ſtrongly marked are the ſentiments of the goſpel! Our offences ſo fully imputed to *CHRIST*, as to be accounted his. His righteouſneſs ſo fully imputed to us, as to be accounted ours. In him we are *complete*, becauſe his moſt obedient life, and his all-atoning death are ours. We are guiltleſs, not thro' our repentance, or reformation, but becauſe he has died for us. We are righteous, not on account of any graces or attainments of our own, but becauſe he has lived for us. To theſe truths I moſt cordially ſubſcribe This is that good old wine that once made Mr *Weſley*'s heart glad. He has ſince taſted new; but I hope he will be brought to ſay, "*The old is better.*"

" Man's offence was counted his,
" Ours his righteouſneſs divine.

" In him complete we ſhine,
" His death, his life is mine:
" Fully am I juſtified,
" Free from ſin, and more than free,
" Guiltleſs, ſince for me he died,
" Righteous, ſince he liv'd for me."

The text lately quoted from *Iſaiah*, is part of a paragraph eminent for its dignity and uſefulneſs. We then conſidered a fragment of it in a critical view; let us now examine the whole of it with a devotional ſpirit. Thus examined, I truſt it will be no longer a dry bone, but *a feaſt of fat things full of marrow*. Permit me to propoſe a correct tranſlation of the original; to add a ſhort illuſtration of the meaning, and then take my leave for the preſent.

" Look unto me and be ſaved all the ends of the
" earth, for I am GOD, and there is nought elſe *.
" By myſelf have I ſworn, the word of † righ-
" teouſneſs goeth out of my mouth, the word
" ſhall not return. To me every knee ſhall bow,
" and every tongue ſhall ſwear ‡, ſaying, Sure-
ly

* *None elſe*-- אין עוד exactly rendered, ſignifies *there is not beſides*. Not any perſon, nor any thing. *No perſon* able to lend an helping hand. *No thing* capable of yielding the leaſt aſſiſtance.

† *The word of righteouſneſs*, אמרה רבר I apprehend is equivalent to St *Paul*'s λογος δικαιοσυνης, and ſignifies, if not the whole goſpel, that precious doctrine, which is the goſpel in epitome. For the vindication of this verſion, ſee *Vitringa in loc.*

‡ *Shall ſwear*. Our tranſlation ſeems to diſcontinue the divine ſpeech here; which weakens the force, and diminiſhes the dignity of the paſſage. I apprehend JEHOVAH is ſtill ſpeaking, and in the following words, preſcribes the form of the confeſſion, or dictates the words of the oath, in which ſinners ſhall teſtify their allegiance,—even the allegiance of faith. Agreeably to this ſuppoſition, I would tranſlate the word אמר *ſaying*.

" ly * in the LORD have I righteouſneſs † and ſtrength. " To him ſhall men come, and all that are offended " in him, ſhall be aſhamed. In the LORD ſhall all " the ſeed of Iſrael be juſtified, and in him ſhall they " glory."

Here the SON of GOD preſents himſelf in all the glories of his perſon, and all the riches of his grace; preſents himſelf as the object of faith, and the author of ſalvation; to be received by ſinners, without any recommending qualities, or any pre-eminence of one above another.—But hear his gracious words:

Look unto me, wretched ruined tranſgreſſors, as the wounded *Iſraelites* looked unto the brazen ſerpent. Look unto me dying on the croſs as your victim, and obeying the law as your ſurety.—Not by doing, but by looking and believing; not by your own deeds, but by my works, *and* my ſufferings, *be ye ſaved.* This is the myſterious but certain way of ſalvation. Thus ſhall ye be delivered from guilt, reſcued from hell, and reconciled to GOD. Who are invited to partake of this ineſtimable benefit? *All the ends of the earth.*

ſaying. It will then denote not *one*, or a few, but every tongue mentioned in the foregoing verſe. תאמר I am aware is of the feminine gender, but every reader knows how often the *Hebrews* neglect the nicety of grammatical conſtruction, and every reader ſees that the idea of אמר or of a *perſon*, is comprehended in the word *tongue.*

* The poophet's אך *ſurely*, is ſomething like the apoſtle's αλλα μενουνγε, *yea*, doubtleſs, *Phil.* iii. 8. The HOLY GHOST teaches believers to ſpeak with vehemence upon this point, to ſignify their ſtedfaſt and reſolute affiance in the glorious REDEEMER, together with the mighty and matchleſs importance of this faith. I have taken in this idea, becauſe it is ſuggeſted by the *Engliſh* tranſlation, though I prefer the *excluſive* ſenſe *only*; as implying an abſolute and total renunciation of every other confidence.

† *Righteouſneſs.* This is the preciſe ſignification of צדקות which being in the plural number, ſeems to denote *completeneſs.* A righteouſneſs, perfect, entire, and lacking nothing; having every thing neceſſary for our pardon, our acceptance, our everlaſting juſtification.

earth. People of every nation under heaven; of every ſtation in life; of every condition, and every character, not excepting the chiefeſt of ſinners.

Is it poſſible that the obedience of *one* ſhould ſave innumerable millions? It is not only poſſible, but indubitable. *For I am GOD* infinite in dignity and power; therefore all-ſufficient, yea, omnipotent to ſave; to ſave all that come unto me; be the multitudes ever ſo great, or their caſes ever ſo deſperate.—(Is nothing to be done by tranſgreſſors themſelves? Are no conditions to be fulfilled on their part?) None, —*there is nought beſide me*. No perſon can take any ſhare in this great tranſaction. Nothing can in the leaſt degree co-operate with my merits. Should you add to my obedience and death, all that ſaints have performed, and martyrs have endured, it would be like adding a grain to the ſands of the ocean, or a moment to the days of eternity.

Such is my compaſſionate invitation, and this my inviolable decree. *I have* not only ſpoken, but *ſworn*; ſworn by myſelf, and all my incomprehenſible excellencies. *The word of righteouſneſs*, that which relates to the grandeſt of all ſubjects, and moſt important of all intereſts, is planned, adjuſted, and unalterably determined. Now, even now, *it goes out of my mouth*, is declared with the utmoſt ſolemnity, and eſtabliſhed by veracity itſelf. The word ſhall not return, either to be repealed by me, or fruſtrated by any other.—What is the decree confirmed by this moſt awful oath? We are all attention to hear it. *To me every knee ſhall bow*. Every ſoul of man, who deſires to inherit eternal life, ſhall ſubmit to my righteouſneſs, and as an unworthy creature, as an obnoxious criminal, obtain the bleſſing wholly thro' my atonement.—*To me every tongue ſhall ſwear*. Be man's ſuppoſed virtues ever ſo various, or ever ſo ſplendid, all ſhall be diſclaimed, and my worthineſs alone ſhall ſtand. Renouncing every other truſt, they ſhall repoſe the confi-

dence

dence of their ſouls on me alone, and make public confeſſion of this their faith before the whole world. —But we, O LORD, are ignorant, we cannot order our ſpeech by reaſon of darkneſs.—This then ſhall be the form of your oath, ſuch the tenor of your confeſſion.

Surely—It is a moſt wonderful, yet a moſt faithful ſaying, extremely comfortable, and equally certain. *Only*—not in myſelf, not in a poor frail creature, but *in* the incarnate JEHOVAH alone, in his divinely-excellent deeds, and unutterably-meritorious ſufferings, *I have righteouſneſs*, a righteouſneſs without ſpot, without defect, and in all reſpects conſummate; ſuch as ſatisfies every requirement of the law, and moſt thoroughly expiates all my iniquities; ſuch as renders me completely accepted before my judge, and entitles me to everlaſting life. From the joyful knowledge, the perſonal appropriation, and the perpetual improvement of this ineſtimable privilege, I have *ſtrength* for my ſanctification. Now do I indeed delight myſelf in the LORD, who, perfectly reconciled, and infinitely gracious, has done ſo great things for me. Now do I cordially love my neighbour; and being ſo happy myſelf, unfeignedly long for his eternal happineſs, that he may be a partaker with me of this great ſalvation.

To this ſovereign decree, the prophet ſets, as it were, his ſeal, or elſe, in a tranſport of joy, he foretells the accompliſhment of it. Yes, my brethren, *to him*, even to this gracious *REDEEMER*, *ſhall men come*. I ſee them flying as clouds for multitude, as doves for ſpeed. They believe the report of his goſpel, and receive of his fulneſs—Whereas, *all they that are offended in him*, that cannot away with his doctrine, which pours contempt upon all human excellency, and will allow no righteouſneſs to avail but that which is divine; who refuſe to come unto him, poor, and miſerable, and ſtript of every recommendation; all they *ſhall be aſhamed*. The fig-leaves of their own duties, or their own endowments, ſhall neither adorn them for glory, nor ſcreen

ſcreen them from wrath,—but ſhall abandon them to vengeance, and cover them with double confuſion. While, on the other hand, *all the ſeed of Iſrael*, every true believer, ſhall be juſtified in the LORD. Againſt theſe perſons no accuſation ſhall be valid; no condemnation ſhall take place: ſo magnificent is the majeſty, ſo ſurpaſſingly-efficacious are the merits of their SAVIOUR, that in him they ſhall not only confide, *but glory;* not only be ſafe, but triumphant; clothed with his incomparable righteouſneſs, they ſhall challenge every adverſary, and defy every danger.

To this portion of ſcripture I have led back your thoughts, that I might not cloſe with any diſguſting ſentiments, but might leave a ſweet ſavour on your mind, on the reader's mind, and on the mind of

REV. SIR,

Yours, *&c.*

LETTER III.

REV. SIR,

LET me, now, reſume my obſervations on your epiſtle. Which I do, not for the ſake of diſputing, but for the cauſe of truth.

The goſpel contains many ſublime and glorious truths. But there is *one*, which, beyond all others, characterizes its nature, its import, and deſign; which makes it moſt eminently to differ from every other form of religion, profeſſed or known in the world. I mean the doctrine of *free juſtification*, thro' the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. This is to the religion of *JESUS*, what the particular features and turns of countenance are to each individual perſon.

I have ſometimes amuſed myſelf, with ſtanding by a painter, and obſerving him at his work. Here I have

been surprised to see, how much a very little stroke would alter the aspect of his draught; would turn the gay into a melancholy, or the composed into a frantic countenance. Several of Mr *Wesley*'s touches are to appearance small; but, I fear, they will be found to disfigure more than a little the heavenly portrait; and give a new, not the native, air, to *the truth as it is in JESUS*.—But I proceed; my business being to prove, not to blame.

Sinners who betake themselves to the all-sufficient SAVIOUR for redemption, are fully accepted by GOD, for his beloved SON's sake. This is justification through imputed righteousness, says *Aspasio*.—"That remains to be proved," answers Mr *Wesley*.—I think, it is pretty largely, and, I would hope, it is satisfactorily proved, through the whole book.—Nay, I find Mr *Wesley* himself ere long acknowledging, that "as to the doctrine we are agreed." Either therefore you have received the proof, which you demand; or else you can submit without conviction, and agree without cause of agreement.—Not to take advantage of such slips, I would rather enlarge upon what may be useful.

I would ask Mr *Wesley*; In what other way sinners can be justified or accepted, save only through imputed righteousness?—Through their own good *deeds*, and holy *tempers*? This supposes the fruits to be good, while the tree is corrupt; and would make salvation to be of works, not of grace.—Thro' their *own faith*, standing in the law? Then they are justified before a perfect GOD, by an imperfect endowment; and life eternal is obtained, by the exercises of their own mind, not by the merits of *JESUS CHRIST*.—Are they justified *without any* righteousness, either wrought by themselves, or received * from another? This

* Οι λαμβανοντες, *They who receive the gift of righteousness*. Rom. v. 17.

This is an unworthy thought; this were an unsufferable practice; JEHOVAH himself being judge, *He that justifieth the wicked is an abomination* *.

Say not, GOD is a free agent, and not bound to observe his own law. Say rather, the rule of righteousness revealed in the law, is his most stedfast will; unchangeable as his nature.—Consider also, what this law requires. A satisfaction for sin, not defective, but completely sufficient; a performance of the command, not sincere only, but absolutely perfect.—Will GOD, in justifying a sinner, disregard, contradict, overthrow his own law? In no wise. Since then it insists upon what no mortal can yield, must not all flesh perish for ever?

This would be the unavoidable consequence, if matters rested on human abilities. But here the blessed gospel comes to our relief; shewing us, that GOD, in his immense mercy, and unsearchable wisdom, has found out a way, at once, to satisfy the unalterable law, and save insolvent man; to justify even the chief of sinners; yet without the least violation of justice, truth, or holiness.—What is this way? His own SON accomplishes the great work.—How? By relaxing the precepts of the law, that we may perform them? by disannulling the sentence of the law, that we may escape it? Heaven and earth shall pass away, before any such dishonourable expedient takes place. On the contrary, he gives satisfaction to the sentence, by suffering the tremendous punish-

* *Prov.* xvii. 15. This is an invariable maxim. It is that word of GOD, which endureth for ever. Yet it is no objection to *his* method of justifying the ungodly. Because he first imputes his SON's righteousness unto them; thereby renders them truly and perfectly righteous: then pronounces them such; and, as such, receives them to pardon, to favour, and eternal life.—Does not the text, thus considered, afford an incontestible argument for the necessity of an imputed righteousness?

ment denounced: and he fulfils the precept, by yielding the ſinleſs obedience required.—Becauſe this was to be finiſhed in the nature which had tranſgreſſed, therefore he was made man. Becauſe this was to be truly, or rather infinitely meritorious, therefore the man was one perſon with the GODHEAD.

Still it may be inquired, How the obedience of another can relieve my diſtreſs? How indeed! But by GOD's transferring my guilt to him, and imputing his obedience to me. By this method, the thing is clearly and completely effected. In this method, I ſee a propriety and an efficacy, that ſilence my doubts, and comfort my heart. Accordingly, it is written, in the ſcriptures, *GOD was in* CHRIST *reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.* GOD; the work was too arduous to be performed by a created agent. Therefore GOD himſelf was in *CHRIST.* None leſs than the almighty LORD could execute the buſineſs. But if HE undertake it, how ſucceſsfully muſt it be carried on, and how glorioufly finiſhed!—*Reconciling the world;* not ſetting poor tranſgreſſors to reconcile themſelves, but himſelf contriving all, providing all, doing and ſuffering all that was needful for this great purpoſe; being himſelf the creditor, the ſponſor, and payer of the debt.—How was all this brought to paſs? By *not imputing our treſpaſſes unto us;* but taking them all upon himſelf; bearing them all, in his own body, upon the tree; and ſuſtaining the vengeance due to all our crimes.—Thus was the holy ONE and the juſt *made ſin for us; that we,* ſinful duſt and aſhes, *might,* in the very ſame manner, *be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.* The former could be only by imputation; and ſo only can be the latter.

If men talk of being accepted for *CHRIST*'s ſake, yet reject the imputation of righteouſneſs, they muſt have very inadequate notions concerning the relation which *CHRIST* bears to his people, and the nature of

of his mediatorial undertaking.—Does this seem obscure? I explain myself.—A person may conduct himself so honourably and excellently, as, on account of his worthy deeds, to obtain favour in behalf of another; and this, without being his surety, or any thing like his proper righteousness. Witness the famous instance of the two brothers, *Amyntas* and *Eschylus*.

The former was a gallant hero; who exposed his life, and lost his arm, in the defence of his country. The latter was an abandoned and infamous profligate; whose crimes had brought him to the bar of public justice. The hero, on the day of trial, appeared as an advocate for his brother. He spoke nothing, but only lifted up to view the maimed and dismembered arm. This silent oratory struck the assembly; and pleaded so powerfully, that the criminal was unanimously acquitted.—Here was an acquittal of one, in consideration of the merits of another. But then the obnoxious party had no special interest in those merits. They were not acquired or exercised, with a particular reference to his good. He could not say, they are mine. Neither did they make him, in any degree, or in any sense, righteous.—Whereas, the reverse of all this is true, with regard to *JESUS CHRIST*, and justified sinners. This you and I, Sir, have asserted. Let us never retract the good confession. But, as it is the truth of the gospel, let us still and for ever say,

In HIM complete we shine,
Because
Ours is righteousness divine.

Theron, speaking of the terms *inherent* and *imputed*, calls them nice distinctions and metaphysical subtilties. Mr *Wesley* makes *Aspasio* apply the depretiating remark to the active and passive righteousness of *CHRIST*. Whereas he says no such thing. He means no such thing. He is treating of a subject totally

tally different. And was he to maintain such a sentiment, every one must observe, it would entirely overthrow his whole scheme.

" You oblige us to make use of metaphysical subtilties, by confounding these very different ideas, " that is, CHRIST's active and passive righteous- " ness,"—I could hardly believe my eyes, for some time; though both of them attested, that this was produced as a quotation from pag. 187. In which page, and for a considerable space, before and after, the subject of debate is the difference between inherent and imputed righteousness.—I was, I own, quite vexed, to see *Aspasio* so maltreated; his discourse so misrepresented; and so little regard paid to literary justice. And glad I am, that I did not give vent to my thoughts, just at that instant. I might have been too warm, and not have spared the rod. But, upon cooler consideration, I began to recover, and the prescription of *Horace* was of service,

Amara lento temperat risu.

I began to call your conduct, not artifice or sleight of hand, but incogitancy or thought misapplied. As you had been thinking so long upon the other topic, it dwelt upon your imagination; kept this from your attention; and led you both to mistake and to miscall things. Like a certain preacher, who, having lost his fortune in the bubbles of the year 1719, and having occasion to mention the deliverance of the *Israelites* from *Egypt*, told his audience, that *Pharaoh* and his host were all drowned in the *South* sea—Poor man! he meant the *Red* sea.

Mr *Wesley* proceeds: " We do not confound the " active and passive righteousness."—Does *Aspasio*, Sir? he that considers them particularly and distinctly? he that examines each with a critical and minute exactness? If this be to confound, order and confusion have changed their nature.

" Neither

" Neither do we ſeparate them." It is ſomewhat difficult to underſtand, what you mean by ſeparating the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of our LORD. —Separating them, as to their influence? Then you muſt be ſenſible, this is never done by *Aſpaſio*. You cannot but know, that he diſclaims ſuch a refinement. He proteſts againſt ſuch a practice.—Do you mean, treating them as things really diſtinct, tho' always uniting their agency? Then I am at a loſs to reconcile Mr *Weſley* with himſelf. For, in the very next paragraph, he thus expreſſes himſelf. " Thro' " the merits of his life and death, every believer is " juſtified." Are not the merits of his life here *diſtinguiſhed* from the merits of his death? Does not the former expreſſion denote his active, the latter his paſſive obedience? Or would you be underſtood to mean, " thro' the merits of his life, which are nothing " elſe but the merits of his death?" If you would not ſpeak in this manner, ſo unworthy of your better judgment, you do the very thing which you blame.—This is done ſtill more apparently, in one of your hymns. Where we ſee, not only a ſeparation, but a diſtinct uſe and application of the ſeparated ſubjects.

Grant this, O LORD; for thou haſt dy'd,
That I might be forgiven:
Thou haſt the righteouſneſs ſupply'd,
For which I merit heaven.

I could eaſily excuſe Mr *Weſley*, for being a little inconſiſtent with himſelf; did he not alſo venture to confront the apoſtle, by the following aſſertion. " Nei- " ther have we any authority from ſcripture, for either " thinking or ſpeaking of one ſeparate from the other." —Does not St *Paul*, in one paſſage, ſpeak of the obedience? in another, of the death of *CHRIST?* Does he not, in one place, enlarge upon the righteouſneſs? in another upon the blood of *CHRIST?* If ſo, we have an authority from ſcripture, we have

the

the example of the chiefeſt apoſtle, for this way of thinking and ſpeaking.

We have alſo a concurrent teſtimony from the genius and import of the original language. Do not ὑπακοὴ and δικαιοσυνη ſignify ſomewhat different from αἱμα and θανατος? Are there any approved writers, who uſe theſe words promiſcuouſly? as ſo many ſynonimous and convertible terms? If not, the voice of grammar will vindicate the propriety of our conduct, while we aſſign a ſeparate diſcourſe to each ſubject, and exhibit them ſeverally in the moſt diſtinct view.

Are not light and heat always united in the ſun? Is the naturaliſt to blame, who conſiders them diſtinctly; and examines each property, in a ſeparate treatiſe? You would commend this practice in the philoſopher, as the way to enter thoroughly into the knowledge of his ſubject. And why ſhould you explode or cenſure it, in the Chriſtian divine? Are not theological truths as worthy of a circumſtantial and accurate inveſtigation, as philoſophical? Will they not as amply reward our diligence, and yield as rich advantage to the ſerious inquirer?

The righteouſneſs which juſtifies ſinners, is already *wrought out*, ſays *Aſpaſio*.—"A crude unſcriptural expreſſion," replies Mr *Weſley*.—It may be ſo. But if the expreſſion is plain and true, I will ſit down content. This, however, you will allow me to obſerve, that it is no new one, and is not far from ſcriptural. *Worketh righteouſneſs*, you know, is a ſcriptural phraſe. Does the word *out* ſpoil it, or the word *already?* I ſuppoſe, the latter may be moſt offenſive. Yet you ſpeak, in this very paragraph, of being "juſ-"tified by the merits of *CHRIST*'s life and death." Are not theſe matters already tranſacted? is not the merit of them already perfect? or can any language expreſs theſe things more clearly, and affirm them more ſtrongly, than thoſe emphatical words in one of your own hymns?

Let

Let us for this faith contend,
Sure salvation is its end:
Heav'n already *is begun,*
Everlasting life is *won.*

Pardon me then, Sir, if I still suspect, that the doctrine and its consequences, rather than the expression and its crudity, awaken your jealousy. If this doctrine be admitted, if the justifying righteousness be already wrought, it must absolutely overturn all your pre-requisites, qualifications, and conditions; conditions of repentance, obedience, and I know not what besides. We must say to every one of them, as *Jehu* said to the messengers of *Joram: What hast thou to do with* the grand article of justification? *Get thee behind me. Could* they be fulfilled, they would come a day too late; like the sickle when the harvest is reaped. Could they be fulfilled in *all* their imaginary dignity, they would, in this relation, be needless; like a proposal for augmenting the splendour of the sun.

"The righteousness which justifies sinful man, was "*set on foot*, when GOD sent forth his SON, from "the habitation of his holiness and glory, to be born "of a woman and made subject to the law.—It was "*carried on*, through the whole course of our SA-"VIOUR's life; in which he always did such things, "as were pleasing to his heavenly FATHER.—It "was *completed*, at that ever-memorable, that grand "period, when the blessed IMMANUEL bowed his "dying head; and cried, with a strong triumphant "voice, IT IS FINISHED."—Upon this extract from *Aspasio*'s discourse, Mr *Wesley* exclaims, "O vain phi-"losophy!"—Philosophy! *this* philosophy, Sir! Never did I hear, till this moment, such doctrines ascribed to philosophy. But this I have heard, and this I believe, that *the world*, even the learned and philosophic world, *by* their boasted *wisdom knew not GOD;* nor GOD's method of salvation, by the sufferings of an

innocent, and the obedience of a divine perſon. Their philoſophy prejudiſed them againſt it; puffed them up with a vain conceit of their own ſufficiency; and ſet them at the greateſt diſtance from ſubmitting to the righteouſneſs of GOD.

I wiſh, Sir, you would ſhew me, in which of the philoſophers I might find theſe ſacred ſentiments; or a grain, or a ſpice, or a ſavour of them. I have, for a conſiderable time, laid aſide my *Plato*, and have no more inclination to turn over my *Seneca;* becauſe I can ſee nothing like this divinely-precious truth, adorning and enriching their pages. But if you will diſcover this golden vein in their works, I will immediately renew my acquaintance with them; and will do the philoſophers a piece of juſtice, which Mr *Weſley* denies them. I will not call their philoſophy vain, but *the wiſdom of GOD, and the power of GOD.*—A righteouſneſs wrought out, and a redemption obtained for us! the former divine! the latter eternal! theſe, rightly underſtood, make us, beyond all the treaſures of literature, *wiſe*. Theſe, habitually enjoyed, will, more effectually than all the delineations of morality or exhortations to virtue, render us *holy*.

A divine righteouſneſs (pardon me for dwelling on my favourite topic) already wrought! A great redemption perfectly finiſhed! And this by the abaſement, the ignominy, the indignities; by the cries, the agonies, the blood of our SAVIOUR. Yea, of our GOD, *in faſhion as a man;* in the form of a ſervant, a ſlave, an execrable malefactor.—What, like this, did a thouſand philoſophers teach? What, like this, do a thouſand of their volumes contain? to ſtab our pride; to tame our fury; and to quench our luſt? to kindle our benevolence; to inflame our devotion; to make us, in a word, *wiſe unto ſalvation?*

"The plain truth is, *CHRIST* lived and taſted "death for every man."—To be ſure then, ſince every man is not ſaved by him, he lived and died only to make

make their ſalvation poſſible.—From this and other hints, I gueſs your opinion to be, that *CHRIST*, by his life and death, obtained only a poſſibility of ſalvation.—[Which ſalvation is to become our own, upon performing terms and conditions, bringing with us pre-requiſites and qualifications.]—If I miſtake you, Sir, in this caſe, you have nothing more to do, than ſimply to deny my ſuppoſition. This exculpates you at once. I ſhall rejoice to hear you ſay, "As *CHRIST* "made us, and not we ourſelves; in like manner he "ſaves us, and not we ourſelves. No human endow- "ments, no human performances, but *CHRIST* alone "is *the author of eternal ſalvation.*"

Should you reply, True—*CHRIST* is the author of eternal ſalvation, but *to thoſe* only *who obey him;*—I muſt then aſk, what obedience *CHRIST* requires? The law ſays, "Do and live." *CHRIST*, the end of the law, ſays, "Believe in ME, and live. Be "verily perſuaded, that I am ſufficient for thy ſalva- "tion, without any working of thine at all. Is not "the SON, the SON of the moſt high GOD, given "unto thee in the divine record? Be ſatisfied with "*his* doing and ſuffering, without wiſhing for, or "thinking of, any thing more, to procure thy final "acceptance."—Let no one account lightly of this obedience. It is the obedience of faith. The obedience ſuited to the name *JESUS*. Obedience to the firſt and great command of the goſpel. Beyond all other expedients, it excludes boaſting; and, at the ſame time, produces that genuine love, that filial fear, which the law of works requires in vain.

Only to make a thing poſſible, and to effect it, are widely different. When our king fits out a fleet, and gives his admiral a commiſſion, to haraſs the *French* coaſts, and deſtroy the *French* ſhipping, he makes the thing poſſible. But to carry this deſign into execution; to accompliſh the enterprize, now become practicable; is a far more arduous taſk, and a far more ho-

nourable achievement. How ſtrangely do thoſe writers derogate from the dignity and glory of the REDEEMER, who would aſcribe to him, what correſponds with the former; and attribute to man, what bears a reſemblance to the latter!

If *CHRIST* only made our ſalvation poſſible, then *we* are to execute the plan. We are to face the enemy, to ſuſtain the charge, and ſilence the battery: we are to climb the ſteep, to enter the breach, and bring off the ſtandards. And ſo, in all reaſon, the honour and praiſe muſt be our own.—Whereas, the goſpel gives all the honour to the Captain of our ſalvation. He bore the heat and burden of the dreadful day. He made reconciliation for iniquity, and brought in everlaſting righteouſneſs. So that all our officious attempts, like a pinnace arriving after the victory, ſhould be told, *It is finiſhed;* the great ſalvation is already wrought. And inſtead of being diſſatisfied or diſappointed, methinks, we ſhould rejoice, unfeignedly rejoice, in the accompliſhment of the glorious work.

If it ſhould occur to the reader's mind, that the Chriſtian life is repreſented as a warfare; and that we ourſelves are commanded to fight, tho' under the banner of our divine leader; to this doubt I would anſwer,—*The Canaanite is ſtill in the land;* and we fight, not to gain the country, but only to ſubdue the rebels.

"Whoever perverts ſo glorious a doctrine, ſhews "he never believed."—This may be the ſubſtance of what *Aſpaſio* maintains; tho' not repreſented ſo fully or ſo clearly, as he has expreſſed himſelf. However, ſuch a ſmall wrong we will readily excuſe. It was done with no ſiniſter intention, but for the ſake of brevity.

To this poſition Mr *Weſley* replies; "Not ſo."—That is; they did really and truly believe. But, after their belief, they apoſtatized, and fell from the faith. They were, ſome time, the members of *CHRIST*, and temples of the HOLY GHOST; but, quickly ſevered

ſevered from their divine head, they became the ſlaves of the devil, and brands for the everlaſting burning. Their names were, indeed, written in heaven. But, it ſeems, the heavenly records were leſs faithful than the pariſh-regiſter. They were quickly eraſed, and their place in the book of life knew them no more.

Or thus—They did as really and truly believe, as thoſe who are now in the manſions of glory. But, after their true *knowledge of the name of the* LORD JESUS; after their full conviction of his ſufficiency and faithfulneſs for their ſalvation; even ſuch as inclined and enabled them, to *put their truſt in him alone*, for their acceptance with GOD; they were diſappointed. Though *CHRIST* called them *his ſheep*, as thus *hearing his voice;* yet he did not *give unto them eternal life*, according to his promiſe; but ſuffered Satan to *pluck them out of his hand.*

Theſe ſentiments have no very probable, much leſs have they a pleaſing or recommending aſpect. Let us inquire, whether they comport with St *John*'s determination of the caſe. Speaking of ſuch backſliders, he ſays, *They went out from us, but they were not of us.* Mr *Weſley*, to be conſiſtent with himſelf, ſhould ſay on this occaſion; "Not ſo; they were of you, but they "fell away from you."—The apoſtle proceeds; *For, if they had been of us, no doubt, they would have continued with us.* Had they been really converted, they would moſt undoubtedly have continued in our doctrine and fellowſhip. Their revolt from our *doctrine*, is a manifeſt proof, that they never truly received it, nor with their heart believed it. Their departure from our *fellowſhip*, is an evident indication, that they were, notwithſtanding all their profeſſions, ſtill carnal, and never renewed by grace.

Mr *Weſley* produces a text from St *Peter*, with a view to ſupport his objection. They who *turn back as a dog to his vomit, had once eſcaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of* CHRIST. Here and

and elsewhere I perceive the cannon roar, but without feeling the ball. Before this piece of sacred artillery can be brought to bear upon us, it will be necessary to prove, that the knowledge of *CHRIST*, or even believing in *CHRIST*, always signifies true faith. In some places, it certainly does. In other places, it signifies no such thing. *Though I have all knowledge*, says the apostle; yet even with this specious endowment I may *be nothing*. There is a knowledge, says the same author, which, instead of *edifying*, or establishing the soul in godliness, *puffeth up* with pride. We are likewise assured, that *Simon* the sorcerer, though in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, yet had *knowledge of the things which concerned the kingdom of GOD, and the name of* JESUS CHRIST; nay, that *he also believed*, yet had neither lot nor portion in the inestimable blessing.

Let us attend to the apostle's manner, and we shall be led to put the same interpretation upon the phrase, as it is used in the passage before us.—These people are not described like the true believers, to whom he addresses the epistle. Here is no mention of their being *partakers of a divine nature;* of being *born again by the incorruptible seed;* or of having their *souls purified by the SPIRIT*. They are only said to have escaped the pollutions of the world.—Again; the word expressive of these pollutions is μιασμαλα, which denotes the grossest excesses, and most scandalous iniquities. Consequently, their abstaining from such abominations, implies no more than what is called a negative goodness, or a mere external reformation. Their lusts had been restrained only, not subdued. Therefore the unhappy wretches were easily overcome by their old corruptions.—It is farther observable, that St *Peter* never considers these persons as new creatures. He calls them by no other name, than the *dog* and the *sow*. Such they were at first; no better, under all their profession of Christianity; and no other, even in their foulest

foulest relapses. When they returned again to their vomit, or their filthy practices, they returned to their own.

There is, then, a knowledge of *CHRIST*, which is only superficial and notional; floats idly on the understanding, but neither penetrates, nor sanctifies the heart. There is also a knowledge of *CHRIST*, which is wrought by the SPIRIT, and ingrafted into the soul; which receives the gift of righteousness, and brings justification into the conscience. The comfort and joy of which mortify the love of sin, and produce the life of holiness. This knowledge, Sir, may you and I teach; in this knowledge may our hearers and readers abound; and may the *divine* power give us, by means of this knowledge, all things pertaining to life and godliness!

The goodness of GOD leadeth to repentance.—"This "is unquestionably true," says Mr *Wesley*. "But "the nice metaphysical doctrine of imputed righte-"ousness."—Should you not rather have said, the nice metaphysical *phrase?* since, as to the *doctrine*, we are, according to your own confession, agreed; bound therefore, each of us, equally bound to clear it of the consequences, with which it may be charged, by the author of the Preservative, or by any other objector.—And as to the phrase, I cannot understand, by what authority Mr *Wesley* calls it *metaphysical*. *Theron*, it is true, uses the word, and applies it to the present subject. But does not Mr *Wesley* know, that *Theron* often personates an enemy, and speaks the language of unbelief?—Be pleased, Sir, to explain your term; and shew, in what sense it is compatible with this article of my faith? "I am acquitted and "counted righteous before GOD, only through the "imputation of my SAVIOUR's obedience and death?" Which is, both in style and sentiment, truly evangelical; but, in no degree, that I can discern, metaphysical.

When

When Mr *Wesley* adds, "This leads not to repentance, but to licentiousness;" he speaks what we understand, not what we allow.—Will any one say, that speculative reasoning upon the goodness of GOD, or contemplating it barely in our ideas, leadeth to repentance? But, when we taste and enjoy, when we apply and appropriate, his profusely-rich liberality in *CHRIST;* we are thereby prompted to neglect, abuse, and dishonour our great benefactor? Or shall it be said, the divine goodness, manifested in common providence and inferior instances, tends to awaken love and work godliness? But the same divine goodness, shining forth in the most illustrious manifestation, that men or angels ever knew; shining forth with a glory, a richness, a perfection, sufficient to transport heaven and earth with joy unspeakable: *this* goodness tends to excite contempt of GOD, and to cherish carnal indulgence? Such an insinuation, so depretiatory to the righteousness of the blessed *JESUS*, I had much rather have heard in a *Jewish* synagogue, than have seen in Mr *Wesley*'s writings.

No, Sir; this and this alone leadeth *a sinner* to repentance. Not all the munificence of the DEITY; neither the rain from heaven, nor fruitful seasons; neither the fatness of the earth, nor the abundance of the seas; can take away the enmity of our nature, and reconcile our affections to GOD. Nothing, nothing but a sense of pardon and acceptance, thro' the work finished on IMMANUEL's cross.—If you please to review the text, you will not affirm, that the apostle is asserting the efficacious influence of providential goodness on the hearts of men. He is evidently inveighing against the gross and almost general abuse of such bounty. Though it ought, it does not produce gratitude and duty. It would indeed upon upright, but it does not thus operate upon depraved minds. No cause is adequate to this effect,

but

but free juſtification through *JESUS CHRIST*.

" The believer cannot but add to his faith, works " of righteouſneſs."—During his firſt love," ſays Mr *Weſley*, " this is often true. But it is not true " afterwards, as we know and feel by melancholy " experience."—How, Sir! do you yourſelf feel this? Where then is your ſinleſs perfection? Can they be perfect, whoſe love ceaſes to glow, and whoſe zeal loſes its activity? Does Mr *Weſley* himſelf make this confeſſion? Let him then ſay with us;—and let us ſay, with invariable ſtedfaſtneſs, and with increaſing gratitude,—Bleſſed be GOD for perfection in *JESUS CHRIST!*

Do you learn, Sir, what is here acknowledged, by obſervations made upon others? Then thoſe others, I apprehend, if they do not exerciſe themſelves in good works, either have no faith, and deceive both you and themſelves,—or elſe they intermit and diſcontinue the exertion of their faith. Which neither detracts from the efficacy of the principle, nor diſproves *Aſpaſio*'s opinion. It is not ſaid, the believer never trips, nor falters in the courſe of his obedience; but he always adds to his faith, the duties and works of obedience. Whenever the former acts, the latter conſtantly enſue. So long as we live by the faith of the SON of GOD, we ſhall not fail to bring forth thoſe fruits of righteouſneſs, which are through *JESUS CHRIST*.

This is ſtrongly maintained, by *Aſpaſio*, in another place. " It is as impoſſible for the ſun to be in his " meridian height, and not diſſipate darkneſs, or dif- " fuſe light; as for faith to exiſt in the ſoul, and not " exalt the temper, and meliorate the conduct."—This is very forcibly implied, in our LORD's interrogation to his diſciples; *Where is your faith?* It muſt be dormant and inactive, like the ſap of the trees in winter, or like the faculty of reaſoning in ſleep. Otherwiſe it would baniſh your fears, even

amidſt the raging ſtorm; and produce an undaunted confidence in GOD your SAVIOUR.—The deſign of all this is, to evince the wiſdom of the goſpel, which lays ſuch a ſtreſs upon faith: ſo frequently urges the neceſſity of faith, above and before all things; repreſenting it, as the principle work of the divine SPIRIT, and the great inſtrument of receiving ſalvation. Hence it appears, that the ſacred plan is not formed in vain; much leſs is it calculated to ſuppreſs or diſcourage real holineſs.

"We no longer obey, in order to lay the foun-"dation for our final acceptance." Theſe words I read with pleaſure.—"That foundation is already "laid in the merits of *CHRIST:*" Theſe I contemplate with ſtill greater ſatisfaction.—But when I come to the following clauſe, "Yet we obey, in or-"der to our final acceptance thro' his merits;" with diſappointment and regret I cry, How is the gold become dim! how is the moſt fine gold changed!

A foundation, *for what? Aſpaſio* would reply, For pardon, for reconciliation, and for everlaſting ſalvation; for peace of conſcience, for acceſs to GOD, for every ſpiritual and eternal bleſſing.—A foundation, of *what kind?* In all reſpects perfect; incapable of any augmentation; not to be ſtrengthened, enlarged, or improved by all the duties and all the deeds of prophets, apoſtles, martyrs; becauſe it has omnipotence for its eſtabliſhment.—A foundation, *for whom?* For ſinners; for the vileſt and moſt miſerable of ſinners: that all guilty and undone wretches may come; and though ever ſo weary, ever ſo heavy laden, may caſt their burthen upon this Rock of ages; in full aſſurance of finding reſt, and obtaining ſafety.

This is chearing; this is charming. What pity it is, that ſuch an illuſtrious truth ſhould be clouded, ſuch a precious privilege ſpoiled, by that ungracious ſentence! "We obey, in order to our final accept-"ance."—But is this, Sir, your conſtant profeſſion?

I muſt

I must do you the justice to own, that you have happier moments, and more becoming apprehensions.—When you join in public worship, this is your humble and just acknowledgment; "Although we be unworthy, through our manifold sins, to offer unto "thee any sacrifice; yet we beseech thee to accept "this our bounden duty and service."—When you criticise upon *Aspasio*, the note is changed, and this is the purport of your strain; "We beseech thee to "accept us, on account of these our services; for we "do them, O LORD, with a professed view to this "end,"—To implore acceptance for our duties, confesses them to be mean and contemptible. Whereas, to expect acceptance on their account, strongly intimates their excellency; that they are worthy in a very high degree; so as to obtain favour, not for themselves only, but for a miserable creature also, who confesses himself subject to manifold sins.

I said, "on account of"—For, if you obey, *in order* to your final acceptance; surely, you must expect final acceptance and eternal life, on account of your own obedience. A poor object displays his sores, and relates his distress, in order to obtain your alms. Does he not then expect your alms on account of his sores, his distress, and his piteous tale?—What a coalition is here between Mr *Wesley* and the subjects of the triple crown! I find the whole council of *Trent* establishing his sentiments by their anathematizing decree. These are their words; "If any one shall say, that the righ-"teous ought not, for their own good works, to ex-"pect the eternal reward, through the merit of *JE-"SUS CHRIST*, let him be accursed *."—Do you speak of the merit of *CHRIST*? So do they. Do you, in some sense, allow *CHRIST* to be the foun-

* *Si quis dixerit, justos non debere, pro bonis operibus, expectare æternam retributionem, per Jesu Christi meritum, anathema sit.* De bon. oper. can. xxvi.

dation? So do they. Are your works to rear the edifice, and perform the moſt reſpectable part of the buſineſs? So are theirs.

By this time, I believe, the thoughtful reader will gueſs the reaſon, why you oppoſe and decry imputed righteouſneſs. You are ſolicitous, it ſeems, not barely for works of obedience, but for their value and credit in the affair of ſalvation; for their ſignificancy and influence, in winning the good-will of JEHOVAH. Since this is your notion, you may well be offended at *CHRIST*'s imputed righteouſneſs. This will admit of no partner or coadjutor. This, Sir, in the caſe of juſtification, pours contempt upon all your moſt laborious exerciſes, and admired attainments. Yea, this being divine and inconceivably excellent, pours all around a blaze of glory, in which all our puny doings are loſt, as the ſtars in the meridian ſunſhine.

"We obey in order to final acceptance."—Methinks, this diſcovers no more gratitude, than wiſdom. Is it not an officious indignity to that noble goodneſs, which has ſet forth *JESUS CHRIST* for a propitiation? Is it not a contemptuous diſregard of that heavenly voice, which ſaid, with ſo much ſolemnity, *In him I am well pleaſed* with the children of men? —Does this exalt, does it not degrade the SAVIOUR? Does it mortify, does it not cheriſh the pride of man? —According to this ſcheme, the merits of our LORD are the foundation, not immediately of our acceptance, but of that ſituation only, in which we are ſuppoſed capable of acquiring it ourſelves. They are, in ſhort, no more than a mere pedeſtal; on which human worth, or rather human vanity may ſtand exalted, and challenge the favour of heaven.

Ah, Sir! acceptance with GOD, is an immenſely-rich and glorious bleſſing; a high and tranſcendently-precious privilege; incomparably too high and glorious, to be obtained, in any degree, by ſuch mean obedience

ence as yours and mine.—The pardon of rebels againſt the King of kings! the reception of leprous ſinners into the boſom of heaven! ſhall ſuch effects, than which nothing can be greater; ſhall ſuch benefits, than which nothing can be richer; be aſcribed to human obedience? What, but the very diſtraction of our diſeaſe, can have occaſioned or can account for a thought ſo extreme in abſurdity?—[Shall we, ſordid wretches, with our ulcerous ſores, our withered limbs, and a ſtupor over all our faculties; ſhall *we* think ourſelves able to *do ſomething* for HIM, who needeth not the ſervices of angels? nay, to do ſomething conſiderable enough, to found a claim to that tranſcendent honour and happineſs, the light of his countenance?] —Our adorations! our thankſgivings! our praiſes! our prayers! our preaching! our ſacramental duties! what are they all but filthy rags *, compared with his inconceivable holineſs and glory? What part of his work do we attempt, but we debaſe it with our deplorable imperfections, or pollute it with our very touch?—Shame then belongs to us, ſhame and confuſion of face, whenever we look to ourſelves or our own performances. While all our comfort, all our hope, is to be derived from the only righteous one *CHRIST JESUS*.

If we know not enough of our own meanneſs and impotency,

* *Iſ.* lxiv. 6. In ſuch a light, I cannot but look upon the ſervices and works of frail man. In ſuch a light they are repreſented, in various parts of our public devotions. And if we are but humble enough to confeſs ourſelves *ſinners*, in ſuch a light they *muſt* appear to every diſcerning and impartial eye. Since nothing, even in hell itſelf, is more loathſome, or imparts a more horrid defilement, than ſin.—If ſuch ſervices are a ſweet-ſmelling ſavour to GOD, it is owing to that copious incenſe, (θυμιαματα πολλα, *Rev.* viii 3.) which ariſes from the golden cenſer and the golden altar, (*Rev.* viii. 3.) It is wholly owing to the infinite dignity and all recommending efficacy of *CHRIST*'s blood, intercеſſion, and righteouſneſs.

impotency, let us listen to the prophet *Isaiah* *. In order to our acceptance with GOD, he informs us, *Lebanon* with all her stately cedars *is not sufficient to burn; nor all the beasts*, that range thro' her extensive shades, *sufficient for a burnt-offering*. Nations, whole nations, avail no more than single persons. Should they unite their abilities, and exert all their efforts, to do something which may recommend them to JEHOVAH †; all would be mean, ineffectual, despicable. Mean, *as the drop of a bucket*, which falls to the ground, and none regards it. Ineffectual, *as the dust upon the balance*, which wants even that small degree of impetus, necessary to turn the most nicely poised scales. Despicable *as the atom that floats* in the air, and has not weight enough to settle itself on any object.—Should you reply, In all these things there is some, though very little substance; the prophet farther declares, that *all nations* in the world, with all their virtues, accomplishments, and works, would, before the infinitely-majestic GOD, be as nothing, less than nothing, yea, vanity itself; incapable, absolutely incapable of winning his favour, or doing any thing worthy of his notice ‡.—Blessed therefore,

* Is. xl. 15, 16, 17.

† Do we want to learn the prophet's aim and design in this magnificent paragraph? we may, to our great satisfaction, consult his sagacious and devout commentator *Vitringa*. *Hic altius surgens oratio, non tantum omne meritum abjudicat carni, sed docet etiam et inculcat, esse hæc omnia quæ gentes ad placandum numen finxerunt, merum nihil et inane. Nullum plane pondus afferre in commendatione causæ suæ apud Deum: imo esse* nihilo *ipso et* inani *inferiora, si quid nihilo minus fingi et cogitari possit. Non potest in natura: sed fingi potest et obtinet in œconomia spirituali. Est enim ibi quod ita non* prodest *ad obtinendam justitiam apud Deum, ut simul* noceat. *Cujus generis sunt omnia* ωρηματα *et commenta sapientiæ carnis. Non tantum Deo non commendant, sed potius iram et indignationem divinam provocant*

‡ May I be allowed to elucidate the noble passage quoted above?

therefore, for ever bleſſed be divine grace, that we have a great High Prieſt, in whom GOD is pleaſed; is

above? Sure I am, the reader will not be diſpleaſed with the digreſſion, unleſs the annotator fails in the execution, and has the misfortune

— — — Egregium opus
Culpa deterere ingeni.

The prophet, ſtruck with the contemplation of a moſt glorious perſonage, cries out, like one tranſported and amazed, *Who?* Never was any thing comparable to him, either exiſting in nature, or imaged by fancy. *Who hath meaſured the waters*, the unfathomable deep, and the boundleſs wave; meaſured them, not in his capacious ciſtern, but *in the hollow of his hand? Who hath meted out heaven*, an expanſe in which worlds revolve, and extended to immenſity; meted it, not with an outſtretched line, but *with the ſpan* of his fingers? *Who hath comprehended the duſt of the earth*, all the ſolid contents of this prodigiouſly-large globe, as a little pittance *in the ſmalleſt meaſure? Who hath weighed the mountains*, with all their ponderous ridges, and the hills, with all their maſſy rocks, as a man weigheth an ounce or a dram *in* his *ſcales?*—Here I would only obſerve the judicious choice of objects. By far the moſt diſtinguiſhed and magnificent, that the univerſe affords. The abyſs of waters, and the circuit of the ſkies! the dimenſions of the earth, and the elevation of the mountains! Compared with which, the loftieſt groves are leſs than the hyſſop on the wall; and the moſt ample cities are ſmaller than a grain of muſtard ſeed.

Then follows a compariſon, more admirable, if it be poſſible, than this fine deſcription. *Behold!* The nations, whether on the neighbouring continent or in the remoteſt iſles, are, before this exalted Being, as the ſmall drop of a bucket, which is almoſt too ſcanty to deſerve our notice. They are as the ſmaller duſt upon the balance, which is not ſufficient even to turn the hovering ſcale. They are as the ſmalleſt atom, which has not weight enough to reach the ground, nor force enough to reſiſt the ſlighteſt undulations of the air. Yea, all the nations of the earth, amidſt all their pomp and grandeur, with all their boaſted accompliſhments and admired works, are, before this incomprehenſible G O D, as a mere nothing.—Can

language

is well pleaſed; and his very ſoul delighteth: whoſe ſacrifice, and whoſe work, have merited all the good, that ſinners can want, or the ALMIGHTY can beſtow.

If we are not yet duly humbled, nor willing to profeſs ourſelves beholden to divine grace alone; if we ſtill reſolve to be principals or partners with the one MEDIATOR, in the purchaſe of the ineſtimable jewel, let us fear, leſt *the LORD our righteouſneſs* reſent ſuch a diſhonour done to himſelf; and ſwear in his wrath, that we ſhall have neither lot nor portion in this matter. Of this he has expreſsly warned us by his apoſtle; *If ye be circumciſed* CHRIST *ſhall profit you nothing*. What would St *Paul* teach us by this ſolemn proteſtation?—That no *Jew* can be ſaved? Himſelf was an *Hebrew* of the *Hebrews*; circumciſed the eighth day.—That a Chriſtian would, by receiving circumciſion after his converſion to *CHRIST*, forfeit all his privileges? No; for he himſelf circumciſed *Timothy*, to gain him a fair hearing from the judaizing bigots.—Or is circumciſion here uſed, by way of ſynecdoche, for the ceremonial law? teaching

language go farther? Can imagination take a bolder flight? Yes; the aſtoniſhingly-rich ideas of the prophet add a heightening, a redoubled heightening even to this inimitable picture. The kingdoms of the world, with all their inhabitants, and all their honours, are leſs than nothing; are leſs than vanity itſelf, in the eſtimate of the almighty JEHOVAH.

This, if I am not greatly miſtaken, is one of the moſt highly finiſhed ſketches of the *beautiful* and *ſublime*, extant in the whole compaſs of letters.—Let us always remember, that the majeſtic perſon, whom it deſcribes, is our atonement and righteouſneſs (ver. 2.), is our ſhepherd and guide (ver. 11.); it will then be one of the moſt conſolatory and delightful truths, in all the book of GOD.—And O! may we never forget, that the ſmall drop of the bucket, the ſmaller duſt in the balance, the volatile atom, and that which is leſs than nothing, are intended to ſhew us, what figure our own endeavours, works, and duties make in the ſight of almighty GOD. We ſhall then have a doctrine, moſt powerful to humble us, to abaſe us, and to teach us to renounce our own righteouſneſs.

ing us, that, as the *Mosaic* rites were now abolished, an attempt to continue the observance of them, would be an unpardonable opposition to the designs of Providence? The charitable compromise, recorded in the xivth to the *Romans*, leads to a different conclusion. —Or did those seducing teachers, who required this conformity from the Gentile converts, require them to renounce *CHRIST*, and relapse into mere Judaism? Neither is this at all supposable. They only required such a conformity, "in order to their accept-"ance thro' his merits;" which they never rejected, but only placed as a foundation for their own.

What then can be meant by, *CHRIST shall profit you nothing, if ye be circumcised?* If ye make circumcision, or any thing whatever, besides the righteousness of *CHRIST*, necessary to your acceptance with GOD, ye shall receive no advantage from all that the REDEEMER has done and suffered. This is to halt between works and grace, between *CHRIST* and self. And such divided regards, he will interpret as an affront, rather than an acceptable homage. Indeed, this is, in Christians, the grand apostasy. By this they deny the sufficiency of their SAVIOUR's most consummate righteousness. They cast themselves entirely out of the covenant of grace, and must expect no salvation but by doing the whole law.

This is the awful apostolic caution. To which let me subjoin the plain apostolic instruction—*Ye are accepted*, says St *Paul*, not partially, but entirely; not occasionally, but finally, *in the BELOVED*. All acceptance, of whatever kind, or whatever date, is wholly in him, not in any thing of our own.—The author to the *Hebrews* affirms, that *CHRIST hath obtained redemption*, not left it to be accomplished, either in greater or smaller measure, by our diligence and duties. No; he himself hath obtained, both present and final, yea, complete and *eternal redemption for us*. And will you, Sir, ascribe to your own obedi-

ence, what the apoſtle ſo expreſsly aſcribes, and ſo entirely appropriates, to the bleſſed JESUS?—The ſame writer aſſures us, that *CHRIST, by one offering, hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* Them that are cleanſed with the blood of ſprinkling, he hath not only diſcharged from the guilt of ſin, but rendered them unblameable and unreprovable, before the Majeſty of heaven. He hath done all that is neceſſary for their full, perfect, and everlaſting acceptation. Yes; whether it be in life or death; whether it be at the throne of grace, or the tribunal of judgment; during the ſpan of time, or thro' the ages of eternity; all that is neceſſary for our perfect acceptation is done: done by an infinitely-better hand, than our own; by an infinitely-better expedient, than any human obedience.

Do I, by theſe remonſtrances, ſet at nought true holineſs? or ſuppoſe a ſalvation ſeparate from holy obedience? You, Sir, cannot entertain ſuch a ſuppoſition; ſince, in your very laſt remark, you was diſſatisfied with my inſiſting on the *inſeparable* connection of a living faith, and works of righteouſneſs.—I honour and prize works of righteouſneſs. I would inceſſantly inculcate, both the indiſpenſable neceſſity, and the manifold utility, of holy obedience. We are redeemed, that we may be zealous of good works. We are created in *CHRIST JESUS*, that we may be able to do good works. And by good works we are to glorify our FATHER which is in heaven.

Only I would have good works know their proper ſtation, and their proper office. I am far from ſetting at nought the ſervices of the hand or the foot. But I ſhould very much diſapprove their deſign, I ſhould utterly deſpiſe their pretenſions, if they ſhould offer to intrude themſelves on the province of the eye, or act as the organs of ſight. Apply this ſimile to the obedience of man, and juſtification before GOD, or acceptance with GOD, you will then ſee, in what

rank

rank I place, in what eſteem I hold, both the one and the other.

As I would have obedience know its proper place, ſo I would have it take a right form. The obedience, which you propoſe, is the obedience of the bond-man, not of the free. A ſlave, bought with our money, obeys in order to be accepted. A ſervant, hired to diſpatch our buſineſs, obeys in order to receive his wages. But the child obeys, becauſe he is beloved; becauſe he is the heir; and all things, which the father hath, are his.

"Obey in order to acceptance!"—Indeed, Sir, you quite miſtake the principle and ſource of Chriſtian obedience. Nor ſhall I undertake to rectify your miſtaken apprehenſions, leſt you ſhould ſcorn to learn from an inferior. I will refer you to a ſet of teachers, from whom you need not bluſh to receive inſtruction. But as this may demand a very particular conſideration, I ſhall poſtpone it to ſome future opportunity, and aſſign it to a diſtinct epiſtle.

In the mean time, if you ſhould aſk, why I have been ſo copious upon this point? I anſwer, becauſe it is a matter of the utmoſt importance. An error on this ſubject, is as detrimental to our ſpiritual welfare, as a fault in the firſt concoction is to the animal conſtitution. A miſtake concerning acceptance with GOD, muſt ſet in a falſe light every religious truth, and ſhed a malignant influence on every religious ſentiment.

If you aſk, why I have repeated the obnoxious propoſition, almoſt as frequently as the rams horns ſounded the fatal blaſt, on the day when *Jericho* was overthrown? I anſwer, For the very ſame purpoſe. To overthrow, if poſſible, ſo pernicious a notion; to lay it as low, as the fortifications of that devoted city. And I hope, neither Mr *Weſley*, nor any other, will attempt to rebuild it, leſt they *lay the foundation thereof*, in the diſhonour of the bleſſed REDEEMER, *and ſet up the gates of it*, in the diſtreſs of precious

ſouls. Both which effects, I am perſuaded, are very remote from your intention. That they may be equally remote from your preaching, your writing, and all your doctrine, is the ſincere wiſh of, &c.

LETTER IV.

Rev. Sir,

I Had, in the warmth of my concern, almoſt forgot to take notice of a text, which you produce from 1 *Tim.* vi. 17, 18, 19.; and, which is ſomewhat ſtrange, produce as a proof, that the apoſtle requires Chriſtians "to obey, in order to their final "acceptance."

Is *Paul* then become the apoſtate? and do the curſes which he has denounced againſt the ſeducers of the *Galatian* converts, fall at length on his own head? He placed *Timothy* at *Epheſus*, as a bulwark againſt the encroachments of other doctrines. Was it with a reſerve for liberties of this kind, which he himſelf ſhould take? Can we think his mind ſo much altered, ſince he told thoſe very *Epheſians*, that, without ſeeking acceptance through their obedience, *they were* already *accepted in the BELOVED!* Does he now retract the bleſſed truth? adviſing the rich, to raiſe a cloud of golden duſt, that it may cover their ſins, and waft them to the ſkies? at the ſame time, excluding the poor from the fellowſhip of this new goſpel, and the hope of glory. Is he grown aſhamed of that righteouſneſs of GOD, which, he aſſured the *Romans*, was the power of GOD unto ſalvation, only through believing? And are we, Sir, grown weary of that pure doctrine, which was reſtored to us, by our glorious reformers? Are we willing to give up the depoſitum, and return to the more than *Egyptian* darkneſs of friars and monks? with whom

— *Cœlum*

— — *Cælum eſt venale DEUSque!*

But to the point.—I ſhall tranſcribe the text, and add a ſhort paraphraſe; which may, perhaps, explain the meaning, and beſt refute the objection. *Charge them that are rich in this world, that they do good, that they be rich in good works, ready to diſtribute, willing to communicate; laying up in ſtore for themſelves a good foundation, that they may lay hold on eternal life. Charge them*, thoſe believers * among you, *who are rich in this world; that they do good*, that, as members of *CHRIST*, they ſhew kindneſs, and exerciſe beneficence to others. *That they be rich in good works*, abounding in thoſe works and labours of love, which flow from faith, or a comfortable perſuaſion of their intereſt in *CHRIST*. *Ready to diſtribute*, on all proper occaſions, with chearfulneſs and delight; as counting it more bleſſed to give, than to receive. *Willing*, even without ſolicitation, *to communicate;* and not only embracing, but ſeeking every opportunity of relieving the neceſſitous. Lightly eſteeming all that is called wealth here below; and *laying up in ſtore for themſelves* another kind of treaſure, [even *CHRIST*, who is the pearl of price, and the true riches.] This will be *a good foundation* of hope, of comfort, and joy: *againſt the time to come*, whether it be the trying ſeaſon of ſickneſs, the awful hour of death, or the more tremendous day of judgment: That, placing their affections on him,

[* The exhortation is addreſſed, not to the ungodly, but to true believers; who had received *CHRIST*, and were ſaved through grace; conſequently, had no need to *win* or *attain* eternal life, but only to make it, in their own apprehenſion, or to their own conſciences, more and more *ſure*. Had they been unconverted people, the apoſtle would, like his divine MASTER diſcourſing with the rich, but unregenerate *Nicodemus*, have ſtruck at the root of their miſery; and ſpoke of more important things, than diſtributing a little ſhining duſt among the poor.]

him, and having their treasure in him, they may be found wise merchants: not grasping uncertainties and shadows, but *laying fast hold on* * sure and substantial possessions; even *on eternal life*.

"*We establish the law:* we provide for its honour "by the perfect obedience of *CHRIST;* says *Aspa-* "*sio*.—Can you possibly think," replies Mr *Wesley*, "that St *Paul* meant this?"—Before I answer this question, give me leave to ask another. Have you, Sir, done justice to *Aspasio?* Is what you quote, the whole of his interpretation? Have you not secreted a sentence, which speaks the very thing you blame for omitting?

A member of the house of Commons, haranguing the honourable assembly, took the liberty to assert, "The gentlemen in the ministerial interest, never "propose any thing for the good of their country." —This was no sooner uttered, than a warm partizan of the other side starting up, complained loudly of calumny and scandal. Hold, Sir, for a moment, said the interrupted orator. Let me just finish my sentence, and

* *Take fast hold on*—thus I would translate that emphatical compound word ἐπιλαβοῦ. Which agrees with the experience of the Christian, and is not without the authority of the critic.—With *the experience of the Christian.* Since believers, by the exercise of faith, producing all good works, are continually maintaining and increasing their hold of *CHRIST;* and of that eternal life, which is given them in him.—With *the authority of the critic.* For the word signifies, "to seize "with great vehemency; to lay hold on with both hands, as "upon a thing we are glad to have got, and will be loath to "let go again." Leigh's *Crit. Sacr.*—That it does not, in this connection, denote an apprehending of somewhat not taken hold of before, is evident from verse the twelfth, where this very exhortation is directed to *Timothy* himself: who was an eminent man of GOD, and the subject of particular prophecies; was a believer of the first class, and an undoubted heir of life and immortality: who needed not therefore *to attain*, but to live in the stedfast hope and unintermitted expectation of the glorious inheritance.

and then give vent to your vehement invectives. My intention was to have added; "but we in the oppo-"sition readily agree to their measures."—Upon hearing this explanation, the house smiled, and the hasty zealot sat down ashamed.

Let me produce the whole period now under consideration. Then I believe, the reader will allow, that Mr *Wesley* has imitated this hasty gentleman, in one instance; and whether he has not some reason to imitate him in another, I shall leave to his own determination.—Immediately after the display of free justification, or of *righteousness imputed without works* *, *Aspasio*, aware of the possibility of abusing his doctrine, asserts the indispensable necessity of holiness. This done, as quite cleared from the accusation, he triumphs with the apostle; "*Do we then make void* "*the law, through faith*, in the imputed righteous-"ness of our LORD? *GOD forbid! yea, we esta-*"*blish the law*. Considered as the original *covenant* "of life, we provide for its honour, by the perfect "obedience of *CHRIST*. Considered as the inva-"riable *standard* of duty; we enforce its observance, "by the most rational, manly, and endearing mo-"tives †."—Here, Sir, was hardly any room for the precipitancy of interruption, because the whole passage lay before you. And it is a little surprising, that you should see and animadvert upon the former clause; yet neither see, nor regard the clause immediately following.

"Did such a thought (of establishing the law, by "the atonement and righteousness of CHRIST) ever "enter into St *Paul*'s mind?"—Let the preceding context determine. Has the apostle been opening the true sense of the precepts, that they might be rightly understood? Has he been inculcating the inviolable obligation of the precepts, that they might be duly practised; Has he not been asserting a justification absolutely

* Rom. iv. 6. † *Theron* and *Aspasio*, vol. I. p. 192.

folutely free, effected by the righteouſneſs of GOD, without any co-agency from the righteouſneſs of man? Does he not, in the laſt words, profeſſedly encounter the objection, which, in every age, has been raiſed againſt this ſacred doctrine? "Hereby you neglect and "diſhonour the divine law." No; ſays the inſpired apologiſt, the law is hereby *eſtabliſhed*, and ſhewn to be more ſtable than earth or heaven. The grand legiſlator himſelf ſhall be humbled to its obedience; the GOD who gave the law, ſhall bleed for its penalties; rather than a tittle fail of its due accompliſhment.—Magnified thus, the law indeed is, and made for ever honourable. And though *Aſpaſio* does not exclude our practical regards, I do verily, for my own part, believe; that the former ſentiment, againſt which you exclaim, was uppermoſt with the apoſtle, and is the chief deſign of the text.

Yes, Sir, ; it was the apoſtle's chief deſign, to ſhew the perfect conſiſtency of free juſtification with the moſt awful glories of the DEITY; and thereby lay a firm foundation for the hope of a ſinner. Had juſtice, which is the eſſential glory of GOD's nature, or the law, which is the revealed glory of his will—had either of theſe been violated, by the evangelical ſcheme; benign and deſirable as it is, it muſt have been utterly rejected; it could never have taken place; the whole world muſt have periſhed, rather than ſuch an injury be offered to any of the divine perfections. Therefore St *Paul* moſt ſweetly teaches, and moſt ſatisfactorily proves, that, inſtead of being injured, they are moſt illuſtriouſly diſplayed by the obedience and death of *CHRIST*. By this means, JEHOVAH is inflexibly juſt, even in juſtifying the ungodly; and his law is highly exalted, even in abſolving the tranſgreſſor, that believeth in *JESUS*.

Here is firm footing; here is ſolid rock.

Solid r[illegible]e, on which the ſinner may reſt, who is well nigh ſunk in deſpair; while the waves and billows of divine

divine indignation go over his alarmed ſoul.—*Firm footing*, on which he may proceed, who ſees the importance of his eternal intereſts, and does not riſk them on the vague notion of mere mercy; dares not give into the modiſh religion, which leaves ſuch venerable things, as the juſtice of the Moſt High and the law of the Moſt Holy, deſtitute of their due honour; and leaves ſuch impotent creatures as men, to ſhift for themſelves, by doing the beſt they can.

"The plain meaning is, we eſtabliſh both the true "ſenſe, and the effectual practice of the law: we "provide for its being both underſtood and practiſed "in its full extent."—How can you make this proviſion, if you ſet aſide the conſummate obedience of *CHRIST; who is the end of the law for righteouſneſs;* for accompliſhing that righteouſneſs, which its precepts deſcribe, and its conſtitution demands.

O! Sir, did you conſider, what that meaneth, which the apoſtle ſtyles το αδυνατον του νομου, you would not uſe this language. Can *we*—can ſuch miſerable ſinners as *we*, ever dream of effectually practiſing, in its full extent, that law, which condemns every failure; which requires truth in the inward parts, which inſiſts upon perfection, abſolute perfection, in every inſtance, and on all occaſions; charging us,

With act intenſe, and unremitted nerve,
To hold a courſe unfaltering,

to the very end of our lives, and from the beginning of them too?—Attend, I intreat you, Sir, to this moſt ſublime ſanctity of the divine law. Then, inſtead of ſaying, we provide for its performance in the *full extent* of its demands; you will probably ſay, with a more becoming modeſty, we provide for its performance, in a way of willing, chearful, ſincere obedience, ſtill looking unto HIM for juſtification, who has, in our name, and as our ſurety, fulfilled it to the very uttermoſt.

It is, I apprehend, one of your leading errors, that you form low, ſcanty, inadequate apprehenſions of GOD's law; that law, which is a bright repreſentation of his moſt pure nature; a beautiful draught of his moſt holy will, and never, ſince the fall, has been perfectly exemplified in any living character, but only in the man *CHRIST JESUS*.—From this error, many others muſt unavoidably follow; a diſeſteem of imputed righteouſneſs, and a conceit of perſonal perfection; a ſpirit of legal bondage, and, I fear, a tincture of Phariſaical pride.

Should Mr *Weſley* aſk, why I harbour ſuch a ſuſpicion concerning his ſentiments in this particular? I anſwer, Becauſe, here, he ſpeaks of practiſing this law, which is ſo exceeding broad, in its full extent. Becauſe, elſewhere, he repreſents the violations of this law, whoſe leaſt tittle is of greater dignity than heaven and earth, as ſmall matters; as petty offences; or, to uſe his own words, as "things not exactly right."—But more of this hereafter.

Aſpaſio, to vindicate the equity of the future judgment, declares, "I ſee nothing arbitrary in this pro-"cedure; but an admirable mixture of juſt ſeverity, "and free goodneſs. On thoſe, who reject the a-"tonement, juſt ſeverity. To thoſe, who rely on "their SAVIOUR, free goodneſs."—Mr *Weſley*, as though he would exculpate the ungodly, aſks, "Was "it ever poſſible for them not to reject it?"—What ſays our infallible Counſellor; the TEACHER ſent from GOD? *They will not come to ME, that they may have life.* They rejected his counſel. They would not ceaſe from their own works, and betake themſelves wholly to the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. This method of ſalvation they diſliked. It was fooliſhneſs unto them. Therefore they were diſobedient to the heavenly call.—Does this take away their guilt? Muſt GOD be reckoned unjuſt in puniſhing, becauſe men are obſtinate in their unbelief?

GOD

GOD does not require me, as you too injuriously hint, to "touch heaven with my hand," in order to escape damnation. But he invites and requires me, to accept of *CHRIST* and his salvation. If, intent upon any imaginary accomplishments of my own, I overlook the gift; or if, eager in the pursuit of worldly gratifications, I trample upon it; is not the fault entirely my own? Does it not proceed from the folly of my mind, or the bad disposition of my heart; and leave my conduct without excuse?

Justification is complete, the first moment we believe; and is incapable of augmentation. Thus *Aspasio* speaks. Thus Mr *Wesley* replies, "Not so"—And has he, for his authority, a single text of scripture? No; but the whole council of *Trent;* one of whose canons dogmatizes in this manner: "If any shall affirm, that righ-" teousness received is not preserved, and increased "likewise, by good works; but that good works are "only the fruits and signs of justification obtained, "not the means of increasing it also, let him be ac-"cursed *."—I am sorry, Sir, to see you again in such company. And I would hope, if it were not an unhandsome reflection, you did not know your associates. Yet it is strange, that a *Protestant* divine should have been so inattentive to the main part of his character; or should be able to forget, that complete justification, through the righteousness of our LORD alone, is the very essence, soul, and glory of the *reformation*.

But let us examine the point.—Justification, I apprehend, is one single act of divine grace. It must, therefore, be either done, or undone. If done, in my very idea of the act, it includes completeness. So that to speak of incomplete justification, is a contradiction

* *Si quis dixerit, justitiam acceptam non conservari, atque etiam non augeri coram Deo per opera bona, sed opera ipsa fructus solummodo et signa esse justificationis adeptæ, non etiam ipsius augendæ causam, anathema esto.* Sess. vi. can. 24.

diction in terms; like ſpeaking of dark ſunſhine, or a round ſquare.

An incomplete juſtification ſeems, in the very nature of things, to be an abſolute impoſſibility. Even an earthly judge cannot juſtify, where there is the leaſt departure from integrity. He may overlook; he may ſhew clemency; he may forgive. But he cannot, in ſuch a caſe, pronounce righteous. Much leſs can we ſuppoſe, that juſtification ſhould take place before an infinitely-pure and jealous GOD, unleſs all guilt be done away, and the perſon be rendered *completely righteous*.

Beſides, can *that* juſtification be other than complete, which is brought to paſs by the moſt majeſtic SON of GOD? by his perfectly-holy nature; by his infinitely-precious ſufferings; and by his inconceivably-meritorious obedience? This, if any thing in the world, muſt be abſolutely complete; beyond compare, and beyond imagination complete; to ſpeak all in a word, complete in proportion to the dignity, perfection, and glory of the accompliſher.

Is any ſuch notion, as an incomplete juſtification, to be found in the Bible? St *Paul* ſays, *Whoſoever believeth is juſtified;* to all intents and purpoſes juſtified. No, ſays Mr *Weſley;* he may be juſtified only in part or by halves.—He that believeth, adds the apoſtle, *is juſtified from all things*. No, replies Mr *Weſley;* many that believe, eſpecially in the infancy of their faith, are juſtified only from *ſome* things. There is no neceſſity, that juſtification ſhould be complete, when or where-ever it exiſts.

Is there no neceſſity? Why then does the voice of inſpiration aſſert, that *the righteouſneſs of GOD* is upon them that believe? Can a man have that incomparably-magnificent righteouſneſs, and yet be incompletely juſtified? Does not the ſame inſpired writer declare,—that this perfect and divine righteouſneſs is upon *all;* not upon *ſome* only, but upon *all* believers? whether they be weak or ſtrong; whether in the firſt moments

moments of their converſion, or in the laſt ſtage of their warfare.—Yes; and he farther aſſures us, that *there is no difference*. No difference, with regard to the righteouſneſs itſelf; for it is the *one everlaſting* righteouſneſs of the incarnate GOD. No difference, as to the reality of its imputation; for it is *unto all, and upon all*. No difference, in the way of receiving it; which is *by faith in JESUS CHRIST*. Conſequently, no difference in the fruits or effects; which are pardon and acceptance, free and full juſtification.

Is Mr *Weſley*, like the *Popiſh* party, an advocate for a firſt, for a ſecond, for I know not how many juſtifications? According to this ſcheme indeed, juſtification may be an incomplete thing. But the misfortune attending this ſcheme, is, that it has no foundation in ſcripture. The ſcripture knows nothing of it; the ſcripture declares againſt it; and aknowledges, as but one faith, but one baptiſm, ſo but one juſtification.

This is the grand ſcriptural maxim; *HE hath, by one oblation, perfected for ever them that are ſanctified*. The oblation is one, needing no repetition, and no appendage. It does not partially accompliſh, but perfects the buſineſs of juſtification; perfects it, not at the laſt only, but from firſt to laſt; yea, for ever and ever; in behalf of all thoſe who are ſanctified; or made partakers of this great ſacrifice, and this divine atonement.

This is the fine ſcriptural illuſtration; *The heir, even while he is a child, is lord of all*. You have, perhaps, a ſon born. Upon this child you multiply your favours and careſſes. He grows in wiſdom and ſtature. Yet neither your favours, nor his growth, add any thing to his ſonſhip, nor augment his right to your inheritance. With both theſe he was inveſted, the firſt moment he drew breath. So, we are no ſooner juſtified, than we are heirs; *heirs of GOD, and joint-heirs with CHRIST*. The perception and enjoyment of this privilege may increaſe. But the

privilege

privilege itſelf, like the birth-right of the firſt-born, is incapable of augmentation.

Would Mr *Weſley*, with the followers of *Arminius*, exclude the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST;* and introduce ſomething of man's as the efficient, or as a concurrent, cauſe of juſtification? Then likewiſe his notion of a gradual, a variable, an incomplete juſtification, muſt enſue. Whether it be faith, which he would introduce for this purpoſe, or repentance, or ſincere obedience, or whatever elſe he pleaſes; according to the meaſure of theſe works or graces, muſt be the degree of juſtification; and not only as to different perſons, but as to the ſame perſon, at different times.

Farther, ſince all theſe endowments are, ſo long as we continue in the preſent ſtate, imperfect; our juſtification muſt, according to this plan, unavoidably partake of their imperfections. It cannot be entire and laking nothing, till mortality is ſwallowed up of life.—But how contrary is this to a cloud of witneſſes from the ſcriptures! *Ye are*, even now, *juſtified. He hath*, even in this preſent time, *reconciled you to GOD.* Through the birth and death of IMMANUEL, there is not only *peace on earth*, but *good-will towards men;* εὐδοκια, favour, complacency, and love, from the holy GOD, to the fallen ſoul. And is not this complete juſtification?

"There may be as many degrees in the favour, as "in the image of GOD."—This objection turns upon a ſuppoſition, that the favour of GOD towards us is occaſioned by the image of GOD in us: which is the doctrine of the law; the very language of Heatheniſm; and has not a ſavour of that goſpel, in which *CHRIST is all.* And I think myſelf more concerned, to remove ſuch very prejudicial miſtakes, than to ſift and adjuſt any nice ſpeculations, relating to degrees of the divine favour. *Aſpaſio* has touched this point. Referring you to his obſervation, I ſhall confine myſelf to a more intereſting ſubject.

It

It is *CHRIST*, who *has redeemed us to GOD*, to the favour and fruition of GOD, *by his blood;* by his blood alone, without any aid from our goodneſs, or any co-operation from any creature.—His work pleaſes GOD. His work magnifies the law. His work is incomparably the nobleſt of all things in heaven or earth. This therefore is our recommendation to the divine Majeſty. Intereſted in this, we ſtand perfectly righteous before the KING immortal, and ſhall be eternally acceptable in his ſight.—It was only on account of *Abraham*'s ſupplication, that GOD ſhewed compaſſion to *Abimelech*. It was only on account of *Job*'s interceſſion, that the LORD was pacified towards his three friends. And it is only on account of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, that the HIGH and HOLY ONE beholds any child of *Adam* with complacency and delight. To *JESUS* alone belongs the honour of reconciling, juſtifying, ſaving the innumerable millions of redeemed ſinners. And is not the LAMB that was ſlain, worthy to be thus honoured, and thus exalted?

Is then our own internal and external goodneſs of no avail in this matter?—Let us hear the eloquent *Iſaiah*, the evangeliſt of the *Jewiſh* church: *The lofty looks of man ſhall be humbled, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be bowed down; and the LORD*, the LORD JESUS CHRIST, *alone, ſhall be exalted in that day.*—Does this text, it may be ſaid, relate to the goſpel, and the caſe of acceptance with GOD? Or is it poſſible to make what follows, conſiſtent with ſuch an interpretation?—Let us ſee, whether it be not, by the HOLY GHOST himſelf, made perfectly conſiſtent with ſuch a ſenſe.

The day of the LORD of hoſts, in the prophetical ſcriptures, generally and principally ſignifies the time of the goſpel-diſpenſation; when the LORD puts the finiſhing hand to his revelation; gives the brighteſt diſplay of his grace; and gathers together all things in *CHRIST*. This

This day, and its influence, shall cause a wonderful revolution in, what is called, the religious, virtuous, moral world. It shall fall like a thunderbolt upon every idol, set up in the hearts of men; shall prove their wisdom to be folly; their ability to be impotence; all their works to be worthless.

This prophecy, being so repugnant to our notions, and so disgustful to our inclinations, is asserted and enforced with the greatest particularity, both as to persons and to things.

As to *persons*.—*For the day of the LORD of hosts shall be upon* whom? upon the sordid wretch, or the scandalous sinner? Rather upon *every one that is proud and lofty* in his own conceit; pluming himself with the notion of some imaginary pre-eminence above his neighbour. It shall be likewise *upon every one, that is lifted up* in the esteem of others; either on account of *Roman* virtue, or *Athenian* philosophy, or *Pharisaical* zeal. And, notwithstanding his aspiring pretensions, or glittering accomplishments, *he shall be brought low;* shall be degraded to the rank of a lost, undone, helpless sinner.

So that none shall have it in his power to say, "I "am better than thou. I stand upon more honour-"able terms with my MAKER, and am a fitter ob-"ject for his favour." They shall all be like prisoners, confined in the same dungeon, and liable to the same condemnation. Every one of them equally destitute of any plea for justification; and all of them, as to acceptance with their CREATOR, without any difference. No difference, in this respect, between the accomplished gentleman, and the infamous scoundrel; no difference between the virtuous lady, and the vile prostitute. No difference at all, as to the way and manner of their obtaining salvation. So that the whole may appear to be of grace.

As to *things*.—This part of the subject is illustrated by a grand assemblage of images; comprehending all that

that is moſt diſtinguiſhable in the viſible creation, and denoting whatever is moſt admired or celebrated among the ſons of men.—Oaks and cedars are the moſt ſtately productions of vegetable nature. Therefore *the day ſhall be upon all the cedars of Lebanon, and upon all the oaks of Baſhan.*—Hills and mountains are the moſt conſpicuous and majeſtic elevations of the earth. Therefore the day ſhall be *upon all the high mountains, and upon all the hills that are lifted up.*—Towers and cities are the moſt magnificent works of human art. Therefore the day ſhall be *upon every high tower, and upon every fenced wall.—The ſhips of Tarſhiſh* are put for the wealth, the advantages, and the various improvements, procured by navigation and commerce. *Pleaſant pictures* may repreſent every elegant and refined embelliſhment of civil life.—The whole collection of metaphors, ſeems to expreſs all thoſe attainments, poſſeſſions, and excellencies, which are ſuppoſed to add dignity to our nature, or ſtability to our hopes; to conſtitute a portion, in which we ourſelves may reſt ſatisfied, or a recommendation, which may entitle us to the favour of heaven.

Yet all theſe things, before the requirements of GOD's law, and before the revelation of his righteouſneſs, ſhall be eclipſed and diſgraced. *Thrown to the bats*, and conſigned over to obſcurity; *thrown to the moles*, and trampled into the duſt. So that, in the purſuit of eternal life, none ſhall regard them; or elſe regard them, only to deſpiſe them.

Thus, ſays the prophet a ſecond time.—To render the work of humiliation effectual, he redoubles his blow. May our whole ſouls feel the energy of his vigorous expreſſions! Thus *ſhall the loftineſs of man be bowed down, and the haughtineſs of men ſhall be laid low.* All notion of perſonal excellency ſet aſide, they ſhall be baſe and vile in their own eyes; acknowledge the impoſſibility of being reconciled by any duties of their own, and place all their confidence on the

propitiating death and meritorious obedience of *JESUS CHRIST*. *They* leſs than nothing; *HE* all in all.

With this important ſentiment I cloſe my letter; not without an ardent wiſh, that it may ſink into our thoughts, and dwell upon both our hearts.

Yours, *&c.*

LETTER V.

REV. SIR,

YOUR laſt, and ſeveral of your other objections, appear more like notes and memorandums, than a juſt plea to the public, or a ſatisfactory explanation of your opinion. They have rather the air of a caveat, than a confutation; and we are often at a loſs to diſcern, how far your remonſtrance is either forcible or appoſite.

Brief negatives, laconic aſſertions, and quick interrogatories, opened by no pertinent illuſtrations, ſupported by no ſcriptural authority, are more likely to ſtagger, ſtun, and puzzle, than to *ſettle our notions in religion*. You ſeem, Sir, to have forgotten, that propoſitions are not to be eſtabliſhed, with the ſame eaſe, as doubts are ſtarted; and therefore have contented yourſelf with a brevity, which produces but little conviction, and more than a little obſcurity.

This brevity of yours is the cauſe, and, I hope, will be the excuſe, of my prolixity; which, I perceive, is growing upon my hands, much more than I intended. If you had been pleaſed to ſhew your arguments at full length, and to accompany with proof your gloſſes upon ſcripture, the reader would then have been able to determine the preponderating evidence between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio;* and my trou-

ble

ble had been considerably lessened, perhaps quite spared.

An instance of the foregoing remark, is the objection which follows.—St *Paul* often mentions *a righteousness imputed*, says *Aspasio*. "Not *a* righteousness," says Mr *Wesley*; "never once; but simply righteous-"ness."—St *Paul* mentions δικαιοσυνη, the righteousness which is imputed, both with and without the *Greek* article. And do neither of these signify *a* righteousness? This is a piece of criticism, as new to me, as it is nice in itself.—Besides, where is the difference between *a* righteousness, and righteousness? Is not every righteousness, *a* righteousness? Is not every person, *a* person? and every prodigious refinement, *a* prodigious refinement?—I thought, Mr *Wesley* had known how to employ his time better than in splitting, or thus attempting to split hairs.

To what purpose, Sir, is this excessive refinement? Many of your readers, I apprehend, will find it difficult to conjecture. For my own part, I freely confess, that I could not, for a considerable time, discern your aim. Nor can I, even now, discover any other design, than a forced endeavour, to exclude the righteousness of *CHRIST;* and introduce a mistaken something of your own, to officiate in its stead. —As the thread of your criticism is spun extremely fine, we must examine it with the closest attention. But first let me just take notice,—

That *Aspasio*, in consequence of his observation, deduced from the apostle's language, asks, What or whose righteousness can this be? To which Mr *Wesley* answers: "He tells you himself: faith is imputed for "righteousness."—But have you never read *Aspasio*'s interpretation of this text? If not, be so impartial, as to cast your eye upon the *tenth* dialogue. There he considers this passage at large, and lays before you his exposition of the words; not imposing it, without assigning a reason; but, together with his exposition,

preſenting you with the grounds of his opinion. If you can overthrow them, try your ſtrength and your ſkill. They ſtand ready to receive your attack; being, at preſent, in full poſſeſſion of the field.

However, if you will not advert to *his* thoughts, allow me, if I can, to penetrate *yours*. "St *Paul* "never mentions *a* righteouſneſs, but ſimply righte- "ouſneſs." Thus, I preſume, you argue—"Not *a* "righteouſneſs; that might ſeem to denote ſome *real* "righteouſneſs; ſome actual conformity to the di- "vine law, imputed to ſinners for their juſtification. "—Whereas, if faith be ſubſtituted inſtead of this "real righteouſneſs; if faith be all that to us, which "our own obedience to the law ſhould have been, "and which *Aſpaſio* ſuppoſes the righteouſneſs of "*CHRIST* is appointed to be; if faith itſelf be all "this to us, then we are made righteous without *a* "righteouſneſs. Something is accounted to us for "righteouſneſs, which is really no ſuch thing.—Then "we ſhall be under no neceſſity of ſubmitting to the "righteouſneſs of our GOD and SAVIOUR, but may "eaſily be furniſhed out of our own ſtock."

Is not this, or ſomething like this, your way of reaſoning? Do you not, in this manner, underſtand faith imputed for righteouſneſs? not as deriving all its efficacy, all its ſignificancy, from its moſt magnificent object; but as being itſelf the efficient of juſtification; the very thing for which we are accepted; in oppoſition to "the wicked and vain commentaries "of the *Calviniſts*, which ſay, that all this is reſident "in *CHRIST*, and apprehended by faith."

This led me to uſe that ſingular expreſſion, "a "miſtaken ſomething." Since this is an egregious miſtake of faith; of its nature, its end, its import.—Of its *nature*. For it is a going out of ſelf, and a flying to *CHRIST*, for pardon, for peace, and for every ſpiritual bleſſing.—Of its *end*. For it is ordained, to preclude all boaſting; that itſelf may be nothing;

nothing; that its owner may be nothing; that the grace of GOD, and the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, may be all in all.—Of its *import*. For it ſays, according to the prophet, *In the LORD*, not in myſelf, *have I righteouſneſs*. It would expoſtulate, in the words of the apoſtle, with its overweaning and doating admirers; Ye men of *Iſrael*, why look ye ſo earneſtly on me; as tho', by my own power or dignity, I had procured your reconciliation, and rendered you accepted? The GOD of *Abraham*, *Iſaac*, and *Jacob*, has glorified his SON *JESUS*, and appropriated this honour to *his* obedience and death. In the matter of juſtification, it is my buſineſs, not to furniſh a contingent, not to ſupply any part, but to receive the whole from his fulneſs.

On *CHRIST's* death ſinners are to rely, as the cauſe of their forgiveneſs; on *CHRIST's* obedience, as the ground of their acceptance. "How does this "agree with pag. 68.?"—Be pleaſed to turn back, Sir; and, with a very little attention, you will perceive the agreement. Then let me deſire you to turn inward; and you will, probably, diſcern more than a little diſingenuity in your own procedure; ſince you reſolve to ſtop your ears againſt the author's explanation, his very particular explanation and reſtriction of his own meaning *.—If you was examining a mathematical ſyſtem, you would always carry in your memory, the leading problems or introductory axioms. If you did not, your own judgment would blame you. And

* In pag. 68. *Aſpaſio*, ſpeaking of the obedience and death of *CHRIST*, profeſſedly declares: "However, therefore, I "may happen to expreſs myſelf, I never conſider them, as "acting in the *excluſive* ſenſe; but would always have them "underſtood, as a grand and glorious aggregate. Looking "upon our SAVIOUR's univerſal obedience, which commenced at his incarnation; was carried on through his life; and "terminated in his death;—looking upon all this, in its *collective* form, as the object of my faith, and the foundation "of my hopes."

when you neglect to do the same, in canvassing a theological treatise, does not your own conscience reprove you?

Our LORD commends such kinds of beneficence *only*, as were exercised to a disciple, in the name of a disciple. Here Mr *Wesley* asks; "Is not this a slip "of the pen?"—Read the passage, Sir; and answer yourself. What are our LORD's words; *Inasmuch as ye have done it to these my brethren.* Have you not then as much reason, to charge our divine MASTER with a slip of the tongue, as to charge *Aspasio* with a slip of the pen? It is undeniably plain, that he does in fact commend only such kinds of beneficence, as were exercised towards *his brethren.* And I presume, you will readily grant, that *his brethren*, the nobler relation, cannot be more extensive than *his disciples*, the inferior.

"Will not our LORD then commend all kinds of "beneficence, provided, *&c.*"—Excuse my cutting short your speech. You are rambling from the point. What *CHRIST will* do, is quite another question. *Aspasio* neither denies, nor affirms any thing, on this subject. All that he considers, is, what appears to be really done, in that particular description of the last day, and its awful process. Nor will he scruple to affirm, a second time, that our LORD applauds such acts of beneficence *only*, as were exercised to a disciple; to believers; to his brethren.

The righteous Judge specifies this sort of munificence, because it is a sure indication of one begotten by the word of truth. It is a test, which none but the saints and faithful in *CHRIST JESUS* will come up to. And a Christian is most properly distinguished, not by what he does in common with others, but by the different principle from which he acts.—Of this particularity *Aspasio* takes notice, on purpose to warn, as well as to exhort his readers. *Exhort* them, that they may abound in works of generosity. *Warn* them, that

that their works may ſpring from the right ſource, faith in the divine REDEEMER.

" You are not willing to call works of beneficence, " tho' exerciſed to a Samaritan or a Heathen," tranſient bubbles.—No more is *Aſpaſio*, in the ſenſe and manner, which you would inſinuate. He calls them ſuch, not abſolutely, but relatively. Not in themſelves, but with reſpect to an affair, infinitely too great for them to tranſact, either in whole or in part. In this view (as relative to juſtification) St *Paul* calls them *dung*, which is deſpicable and ſordid. Surely then *Aſpaſio* may call them *bubbles*, which are ſhewy but inſignificant.—I don't call the deſk, on which I write, a mere egg-ſhell. Yet I ſhould not heſitate to ſay, it is ſcanty as an egg-ſhell, if appointed to tranſport an army to the *Indies;* feeble as an egg-ſhell, if ſet up as a wall of munition, againſt a battery of cannon.

How muſt Chriſtians exceed the Scribes and Phariſees? To this *Aſpaſio* replies, Not only in being ſincere; in having reſpect unto all GOD's commandments; but alſo in poſſeſſing a complete righteouſneſs. Nor can this be any thing leſs, than the perfect obedience of our great MEDIATOR.—" Did our LORD " mean this? Nothing leſs."—Peremptorily affirmed; but not ſo eaſily proved.—Yes, you add; " he ſpe- " cifies, in the following parts of his ſermon, the very " inſtances, wherein the righteouſneſs of a Chriſtian " exceeds that of the Scribes and Phariſees."—He does ſo. But is it not an abſolutely-complete righteouſneſs? A meekneſs, without the leaſt emotion of reſentment. A purity, without the leaſt ſtain of evil concupiſcence. A love, a long-ſuffering, a perfection, ſuch as our FATHER which is in heaven exerciſes. Now if this does not exceed the righteouſneſs of all the Chriſtians in the world, or if this is to be found in any character, ſave only in the character of our great

great MEDIATOR, I retract, moſt freely retract my opinion.

The diſcourſe relates to that righteouſneſs, by which we are ſaved; or by virtue of which we enter into the kingdom of heaven *. And why, Sir, why will you not reſign the honour of obtaining ſalvation, to the moſt bleſſed IMMANUEL's blood and obedience? Why will you hedge up your people's way to the immortal manſions, by teaching them to depend upon duties and attainments of their own?—Should any one, hearing this doctrine, that the law of the ten commandments requires a perfect, ſinleſs obedience; that none can be delivered from the wrath to come, or enjoy eternal life, without this unſinning, perfect obedience: ſhould ſuch a one, ſtruck with ſurpriſe and anxiety, inquire, "Who then can be ſaved?" What anſwer would Mr *Weſley* give?—The anſwer we would make, is obvious and full of conſolation. "No "man, by his own performances. But ſalvation is "to be ſought, ſalvation is to be obtained, by the righ-

"teouſneſs

* *Chriſtus magna aſſeveratione pronunciat, Phariſaicam illam juſtitiam, quæ non perfectiſſime habet integram legis impletionem, non poſſe ingredi regnum cœlorum. Suorum igitur juſtitiam vult eſſe abundantiorem, hoc eſt, ſuos vult ad judicium Dei afferre abundantiſſimam, plentiſſimam, et perfectiſſimam juſtitiam, ut per ac propter eam poſſent ingredi regnum cœlorum. Eam vero, quia in ſe non inveniunt, fide quærunt et apprehendunt in impletione legis, a Chriſto pro nobis præſtita.* Vid. CHEMNITII *Harm. Evang.* p. 722.

A truly valuable work, in which the learned reader will find many traces of lively devotion; many pieces of ſolid criticiſm, and many fine views opened, to ſee more clearly the wiſdom, beauty, and tranſcendent excellency of our bleſſed REDEEMER's life. This book is particularly eſtimable, for diſplaying with great perſpicuity, and enforcing with proportionable zeal, that diſtinguiſhed article of Chriſtianity, *juſtification thro' the righteouſneſs of* JESUS CHRIST; which is, as our author very emphatically ſpeaks, *ipſiſſimum evangelii fundamentum.*

" teousneſs of another; even by the conſummate o-
" bedience of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST.*"

He brings this ſpecious hypocrite to the teſt.—
" How does it appear," you aſk, " that this young
" ruler was a hypocrite?"—It appears from his con-
duct. For he came kneeling to our SAVIOUR, as one ſincerely deſirous of learning his duty; yet, when inſtructed in it, he would not perform it.—It appears from your own character of him. You ſay, " He lo-
" ved the world." Then the love of the FATHER was not in him. That he pretended to the love of GOD, is evident from his own words. That he had no real love, is certain from your own acknowledgment. If pretence without reality be not hypocriſy, pleaſe to inform us, what is.—It is farther apparent from your deſcant on the caſe. " Therefore he could
" not keep any of the commandments in their ſpiritual
" ſenſe." And it is a ſure, as well as important truth, that whoever pretends to keep the commandments, yet does not keep them in their ſpiritual meaning, is a deceiver of himſelf; a deceiver of others; a hypocrite.

" The keeping of the commandments," ſays Mr *Weſley*, " is undoubtedly the way to, though not the
" *cauſe* of eternal life."—How then came it to paſs, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* ſhould declare, *I am the way?* The way, to what? To the favour of GOD; to the fruition of GOD; to every ſpiritual bleſſing; or, in other words, to eternal life.—After ſuch a claim, from ſuch a perſon, may I not, without the imputation of undue confidence, deny your aſſertion in your own form of ſpeech? " The keeping
" of the commandments *undoubtedly* cannot be the way
" to eternal life;" ſince this is an honour, this is a prerogative, which the all-glorious REDEEMER has challenged to himſelf.

Hence your diſtinction between the *way* to, and the *cauſe* of, appears to have no countenance from ſcripture. And will it not, upon a review, appear to

have as little ſupport from reaſon? Caſt your eye upon yonder bridge. It is thrown over a deep and wide river. It is the way, the only way, whereby I croſs the water, and arrive at the oppoſite bank. If ſo, is it not likewiſe the cauſe of my ſafe arrival on the other ſide? There may be, in this caſe, other cauſes, concomitant or ſubordinate. But the bridge is the grand one; that which every body chiefly regards; and to which my paſſage is always aſcribed.

CHRIST therefore is the way, the only way, to life and immortality. By his precious blood, and by his divine righteouſneſs, we paſs the gulf of wrath and deſtruction. By the things which he has done, by the pains which he has endured, we enter the realms of peace and joy. Accordingly, we are exhorted *to walk in him;* and are aſſured, that as many as walk in this way, *ſhall renew their ſtrength.* This is, what the apoſtle calls, *the new and living way.* This is, what the Pſalmiſt ſtyles, *the way everlaſting.* And tho' other ways may *ſeem right unto a man, yet the end thereof are the ways of death.*

A doubt, perhaps, may ariſe in the reader's mind, ſuggeſted by the words of the prophet; *An high way ſhall be there, and a way, and it ſhall be called the way of holineſs.* True. The way is *CHRIST*, the incarnate GOD, with all his gifts, privileges, and bleſſings. *It ſhall be called the way of holineſs* *. None can

* *If.* xxxv. 8. Upon this ſubject, Dr *Owen* ſpeaks excellently. "*CHRIST* is the medium of communication between "GOD and us. In him we meet, in him we walk. All influences of love, kindneſs, mercy from GOD to us, are "through him; all our returns of love, delight, faith, obedience unto GOD, are all through him. He being that "*one way*, GOD ſo often promiſeth his people: and it is a "glorious way, *If.* xxxv. 8. *An high way, a way of holineſs*, "a way that none can err in, that once enter it. Which is "further ſet forth, *If.* xlii. 16. All other ways, all other paths, "but this, go down to the chambers of death: they all lead "to walk contrary to GOD."

See

can enter and advance therein, yet continue carnal and unclean. All that travel this road, renounce the hidden things of darkneſs, and do the works of righteouſneſs. It does not indeed find, but it aſſuredly makes, the paſſengers righteous. And though holineſs is not their way, yet it is a principal part of their buſineſs, while they walk in *CHRIST*.

Aſpaſio, having occaſion to ſpeak of *Abraham*'s faith, quotes the words of the apoſtle; *By works his faith was made perfect*. Which he thus explains; "His "faith hereby anſwered its proper end, and appeared "to be of the true, the triumphant, the ſcriptural "kind; ſince it overcame the world, overcame ſelf, "and regarded GOD as all in all."—To this Mr *Weſley* replies, with the ſolemnity of a cenſor, and the authority of a dictator; "No. The natural ſenſe of "the words is, By the grace ſuperadded, while he "wrought thoſe works, his faith was literally made "perfect."—Your proof, Sir. What have you to make good this interpretation? There is not a word in the text about grace ſuperadded. This is not aſſigned as the cauſe of a perfected faith. Nay, the ſacred writer expreſsly aſſigns another. *By works*, ſays St *James*, his faith was made perfect. No, ſays Mr *Weſley;* but by *grace ſuperadded*. St *James* affirms one thing; Mr *Weſley* affirms the contrary; and who am I, that I ſhould decide between two ſuch diſputants? But I believe, the reader will, without my interpoſal, eaſily chuſe his ſide.

Perhaps, you will reply, If this is not the true

 ſenſe,

See a treatiſe, entitled *Communion with GOD*. By JOHN OWEN, D. D. Which preſents us with the ſpirit and quinteſſence of the goſpel; with the nobleſt privileges and ſtrongeſt conſolations of Chriſtianity; animating us thereby to all the duties of holy obedience.—Here are pinks and roſes in the path. Milk and honey in the cup. Marrow and fatneſs on the table. In many treatiſes, the author has done worthily; but in this, I think, he excelleth them all.

ſenſe, produce a better.—One leſs oppoſite to the natural import of the words, and the apparent meaning of the apoſtle, is already produced. Do you inſiſt upon another? I will then refer you to abler judges. —Shall I ſend you to an expoſitor, whom you yourſelf admire? Dr *Doddridge* thus comments upon the text. "*His faith was perfected by works;* the inte- "grity of it was made fully apparent, to himſelf, to "angels, to GOD."—Shall I remit you to an expoſitor, who can neither deceive, nor be deceived? The GOD of glory ſays, *My ſtrength is made perfect in weakneſs. Made perfect!* How? Is there any ſuch thing as a ſuperaddition to GOD Almighty's power, while he exerts it in behalf of his people? This none can imagine. But it is hereby manifeſted, to their comfort, and his glory. The ſame word is uſed concerning *Abraham*'s faith, and concerning the GOD of *Abraham*'s ſtrength. Why then ſhould it not be underſtood in the ſame ſenſe? Here it is τελειωθεν; there it is τελειωθη. And, in both places, it ſignifies, not lite- "rally made perfect," but illuſtriouſly diſplayed.

Shall I ſend you to a familiar illuſtration? I view, from my window, a young tree. The gardener, when he planted it, told me, it was a fruit-tree, a pear-tree, a right *beaute du roy*. It may be ſuch a tree, and have its reſpective ſeed in itſelf. But this did not then appear. If, when autumn arrives, its branches are laden with fruit, with pears, with that delicious kind of pears; this will be a demonſtration of all thoſe properties. This will not make it ſuch a particular tree; nó, nor make it a good and fruitful tree; but only ſhew it to be of that fine ſort, or make its nature and perfections evident.

St *James* ſpeaks of the juſtification of our faith; thus proceeds *Aſpaſio*. And thus replies Mr *Weſley;* "Not unleſs you mean by that odd expreſſion, our "faith being made perfect."—I mean ſuch a perfection of faith as is mentioned above. Other perfection I find

I find not, either in books or men. Was faith perfect, in *your* ſenſe of the word, love, joy, and all holineſs would be perfect likewiſe. Correſpondent to the principle, would be the ſtate of the production. There would be no longer any cauſe for that petition, which the diſciples put up; *LORD, increaſe our faith.* Nor for that ſupplication, which you and I, ſo long as we continue members of the church of *England*, muſt uſe; "Give unto us the increaſe of "faith, hope, and charity!"

You call the juſtification of our faith an "odd ex-"preſſion."—Is it not founded on the tenor of the apoſtle's diſcourſe? Is it not the native reſult of the apoſtle's inquiry? *Shew me* thy faith. Prove it to be real and unfeigned. Prove it by ſuch acts, as demonſtrate you truſt in *JESUS* alone for everlaſting life. If it ſtands this teſt, we ſhall acknowledge it to be that precious faith, whoſe author is GOD, and whoſe end is ſalvation.—Is not *that* a juſtification of faith, which diſplays its ſincerity, and renders it without rebuke? Somewhat like this would be reckoned a juſtification of any perſon, or of any other thing, and why not of faith?

Something, you ſee, Sir, may be ſaid in vindication of this expreſſion. However, if it be thought improper; if it tend to create any confuſion in our ſentiments; or to draw off our attention from that grand idea, which is peculiar to the word juſtification; the idea, I mean, of being made righteous before GOD; I freely give it up; I will alter it in my book, and uſe it no more.

He that doth righteouſneſs, is righteous: he manifeſts the truth of his converſion, and juſtifies his profeſſion from all ſuſpicion of inſincerity.—"Nay;" ſays Mr *Weſley*, "the plain meaning is, He alone is truly righ-"teous, whoſe faith worketh by love."—*Your* expoſition may be true, and *Aſpaſio's* no leſs true. I leave the reader to determine, which is moſt exactly ſuitable

able to the apoſtle's arguing.—He is ſpeaking of the *Chriſtian* righteouſneſs; that which renders us righteous before GOD; that which fleſh and blood could never have diſcovered; which therefore was graciouſly revealed in the goſpel, and is the principal ſubject of goſpel-preaching. As then there were, and always would be, many pretenders to the noble privilege, St *John* lays down a maxim or a touchſtone, to diſtinguiſh the ſincere from the hypocrite. *He that* uniformly *doth righteouſneſs*, in a way of ſanctification; he, and he only, *is* to be acknowledged by us, as truly *righteous* by way of juſtification.

Far be it from me, Sir, to be fond of wrangling. Where you hit upon the truth, or come pretty near it, I ſhall never be eager to oppoſe. On the contrary, I ſhall be very deſirous to agree; and preſerve, as much as poſſible, both the unity of opinion, and the harmony of affection.—Your own interpretation ſhall take place. Only let your *working* be the ſign and fruit of a righteous ſtate, not that which makes or conſtitutes us righteous. The righteouſneſs of fallen creatures, *is* not of themſelves, but *of me*, *ſaith the LORD*. It is brought in and accompliſhed by HIM, whom GOD hath ſet forth to be their MEDIATOR and SURETY. So that we are made righteous, not by doing any thing whatſoever, but ſolely by believing in *JESUS*. Our character as the redeemed of the LORD, is, ὁι ἐκ πίστεως; *Men*, having their exiſtence, their ſubſiſtence, their all, *by faith*. Hence it comes to paſs, that we really are, what the apoſtle affirms, in the following words, *righteous*, *even as he is righteous*. Not barely righteous, as the moral Heathens, by dint of human reſolution; not barely righteous, as the reputable *Jews*, by the influence of their legal ſanctions; but righteous with that *very righteouſneſs*, which adorns and exalts, and will eternally diſtinguiſh the only begotten SON of GOD.

It remains to be inquired, *what* faith is moſt likely

to

to operate, in this excellent and happy manner? I mean, to *work by* love.—Let me illuſtrate the point by a ſhort apologue; then releaſe the reader from his attention, and the writer from his taſk.

A certain king had two favourites, whom he honoured with his peculiar regard, and enriched with a ceaſeleſs liberality. They both, inſenſible of their vaſt obligations, became traitors and rebels. Being convicted of treaſon againſt their ſovereign, he was determined to overcome their evil with good. Accordingly, when they had nothing to plead in their own behalf, he generouſly forgave them both. The one he diſmiſſed from priſon, and ſuffered to live unmoleſted on his private inheritance. The other he reſtored to all his high preferments, and public employs. He adorned him again with the robe of honour, and admitted him again into the boſom of favour.—Which of them, now, will feel the warmeſt affection for their ſovereign? Which of them will be moſt ready to ſerve him on all occaſions? and, if need be, to hazard even life in his defence?—He, doubtleſs, on whom moſt was beſtowed.

And is not *that* perſon moſt likely to work and obey, from a principle of love, who believes, that his divine LORD has not only bore the curſe, but fulfilled the law for him? has given him, not barely an exemption from puniſhment, but a title to eternal life? yea, has clothed him with his own moſt perfect and glorious righteouſneſs. By virtue of which, he will, ere long, be preſented faultleſs before the throne of judgment, and have an abundant entrance into the everlaſting kingdom.—Will not the faith of ſuch unſpeakably-rich grace, pacify the conſcience, and purify the heart? awaken gratitude to our heavenly Benefactor, and enkindle zeal for his glory? cauſe us to diſcharge all the duties of our ſtation chearfully, and withſtand every allurement to evil reſolutely?

Surely, we may ſay of this faith, what *David* ſaid of

of *Goliath*'s ſword; *There is none*, there is nothing *like it*. For all theſe bleſſed purpoſes, it is beyond compare, and I ſhould think, beyond diſpute, efficacious —That you, Sir, may know more of this faith, and diſpute leſs againſt it, is the ſincere and fervent wiſh of, *&c.*

LETTER VI.

REV. SIR,

AS this letter may probably be pretty long, I ſhall not increaſe the prolixity by a preface; but enter upon it, without any farther introduction.

Whoſo doth theſe things, ſaith *David*, *ſhall never fall*. Which *Aſpaſio* thus interprets, "ſhall never "fall into final apoſtaſy."—You are pleaſed to reply; "*David* ſays no ſuch thing. His meaning is, Whoſo "doth theſe things to the end, ſhall never fall into "hell."—It would be a great wonder, I muſt own, if he ſhould. But if he happens to fail, at ſome times, and in ſome inſtances, what becomes of him then?—However, let you and I, Sir, be at as little variance as poſſible. Where is the extraordinary difference between yourſelf and *Aſpaſio?* If a profeſſor of religion falls into hell, muſt he not previouſly fall into final apoſtaſy; and if he falls into final apoſtaſy, muſt he not inevitably fall into hell?

When you inſert the clauſe, *to the end*, do you interpret? do you not rather interpolate the ſacred text? The words of the Pſalmiſt relate to the preſent time, עשה *doth*, not יעשה *ſhall do*. They contain an encouragement to thoſe, who, at this inſtant, bring forth the fruits of evangelical righteouſneſs. The encouragement is deduced from the comfortable doctrine of final perſeverance. It carries this chearing import; "Whoſoever believes in JEHOVAH, as

"laying

" laying all his sins upon *CHRIST*, and giving him " eternal life freely; whosoever, from this principle " of faith, sincerely loves and willingly obeys GOD; " he shall never fall."—The words are לא ימוט לעולם, *He shall never be moved.* A phrase common among the *Hebrews*, to denote the stability of a man's happiness. An immoveable thing never falls, either one way or another. So, this righteous person shall never fall; either into final apostasy, which is the greatest misery here; or into hell, which is the consummation of misery hereafter.

But I begin to apprehend what you mean, and of what you are jealous. Your exclamation unravels all; " How pleasing is this to flesh and blood!"—Under favour, Sir, I cannot conceive how this doctrine should be pleasing to flesh and blood. Flesh and blood, or corrupt nature, is proud. Any scheme of perseverance, to be accomplished by our own strength, would indeed be agreeable to the vanity of our mind. But a perseverance, founded on the fidelity and the power of GOD; a perseverance, which acknowledges itself owing, not to any human sufficiency, but to an union with *CHRIST*, and the intercession of *CHRIST*; this is a disgusting method. This is what the natural man cannot away with. You will find the generality of people utterly averse to it.—Flesh and blood will not submit, either to be made righteous before GOD, by the imputed righteousness of *CHRIST*; or to be made faithful unto death, by the never-failing faithfulness of *CHRIST*. Try your friends; try your followers; try your own heart on this point.

To the humble believer, I acknowledge, this is a most pleasing and consolatory doctrine. He who feels his own impotence; who knows the power of his inbred corruptions; and is no stranger to the wiles of his spiritual enemy; he will rejoice in the thought, that *nothing shall pluck him out of his* almighty REDEEMER's *hand*. That his advocate with the

FATHER, will ſuffer *neither principalities, nor powers, nor life, nor death, nor things preſent, nor things to come, nor any other creature, to ſeparate him from the love of GOD.*—Without ſuch a perſuaſion, we might too truly ſay of the Chriſtian's joy, what *Solomon* ſaid of worldly merriment; *I ſaid of laughter, It is mad; and of mirth, What does it?* If he, who is to-day baſking in the divine favour, may before the morrow be weltering in a lake of fire; then joy, even joy in the HOLY GHOST is unreaſonable; and peace, even that peace which paſſeth all underſtanding, is chimerical. A building without a baſis; at leaſt, *a bowing wall and a tottering fence.*

Let us examine the doctrine, which Mr *Weſley* ſays is ſo pleaſing to fleſh and blood; or, in other words, to carnal people.—What is the thing which the Pſalmiſt teaches, and *Aſpaſio* profeſſes? That the perſons who are deſcribed in the pſalm †, ſhall never apoſtatize from the true faith, or from true obedience. Is this ſo agreeable to carnal people? Is it not rather unwarrantable in Mr *Weſley* to ſuppoſe, that carnal people either poſſeſs true faith, or perform true obedience, or can be pleaſed with either? Eſpecially, ſince the apoſtle aſſures us, that *the carnal mind is not ſubject to the law of GOD, neither indeed can be.*

Beſides, are not the duties mentioned by the Pſalmiſt, offenſive to fleſh and blood? Do they not require, or imply, the mortification of our carnal appetites,

† The xvth *pſalm*, I apprehend, deſcribes the perfect character. That perfection, which *CHRIST* really fulfilled; and is the righteouſneſs, in which GOD is well pleaſed. The children of the truth are, by the ſame SPIRIT, led to imitate this character, according to the meaſure of their faith. Yet ſo imperfectly, that when compared with it in their own perſons, they have reaſon to pray, *Forgive us our treſpaſſes.* Though, when conſidered as clothed with the fulfilment of all in *CHRIST*, they may aſſure themſelves of acceptance with GOD, and an everlaſting title to the divine favour.

tites, and the diſcipline of our unruly affections? Can it be a welcome piece of news to fleſh and blood, that this mortification ſhall take place? inſtead of being remitted ſhall increaſe? and never, never be diſcontinued, till mortality is ſwallowed up of life?—If ſo, *the old man which is corrupt*, muſt be pleaſed with the curb, and the dagger muſt delight in its own reſtraint, and its own deſtruction.—Such a paradox we muſt believe, before we can eſpouſe Mr *Weſley*'s notion, that fleſh and blood are pleaſed with the doctrine of a final perſeverance in ſelf-denial, in righteouſneſs and true holineſs.

"Should your repentance be without a failure, and "without a flaw; I muſt ſtill ſay to my friend, as our "LORD replied to the young ruler, *One thing thou* "*lackeſt*. In all theſe acts of humiliation, you have "only taken ſhame to yourſelf. Whereas, a righ-"teouſneſs is wanting, which may magnify the law, "and make it honourable."—Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words; upon which Mr *Weſley* animadverts. "One "thing thou lackeſt, the imputed righteouſneſs of "*CHRIST*. You cannot think this is the meaning "of the text."—Neither does *Aſpaſio* affirm this to be the meaning. He only uſes the words by way of accommodation. Could you demonſtrate, that our LORD intended no ſuch thing, yet the ſentence may not improperly expreſs *Aſpaſio*'s opinion; and if ſo, be not unfit for his uſe.

However, let us inquire into the exact meaning of the text. A very little ſearch will yield the deſired ſatisfaction. *Sell all thou haſt, and give to the poor, and thou ſhalt have treaſure in heaven. Treaſure in heaven* was what the young gentleman lacked. Could this be any other than *CHRIST* himſelf? Is not *CHRIST* the treaſure, hid in the field of the goſpel? Is not *CHRIST* the inheritance, reſerved in heaven for us? Is not a communion with *CHRIST*, and an enjoyment of *CHRIST*, the ſupreme felicity of our

nature?—*David* was of this mind, when he publicly declared, *Whom have I in heaven but thee?*—St *John* was of this mind, when he solemnly averred; *He that hath the SON, hath life.*—Whoever is of another mind, has very inadequate, very unworthy notions of heaven and its happiness.—Now if *CHRIST* himself was the *one thing* needed, surely his righteousness could not be secluded. His blood and obedience inseparably accompany his person. He that hath the bridegroom, hath his riches also.

In opposition to this sense, it is affirmed, "Certainly the one thing our LORD meant, was the love "of GOD."—The love of GOD is *certainly* an eminent blessing. Possessed, I should imagine, only by those, who have first obtained eternal life, by *knowing the true GOD and JESUS CHRIST.* But does our love of GOD magnify the law; satisfy justice; or obtain heaven? Are we pardoned, are we reconciled, are we justified, on account of our love of GOD?—The young ruler wants *that*, which may open to him the kingdom of heaven; and *that*, whereby he may inherit eternal life. Mr *Wesley*, setting aside pardon, reconciliation, justification, together with the one perfect righteousness, which procures them, ascribes all to our love of GOD. And, by this means, not to the true love, arising from the knowledge of him, as manifested in the gospel; as having first loved us, in granting us remission of sins, freely through *JESUS CHRIST.*—This notion may pass current at *Rome* *, not among the *Protestant* churches. Our own church has most expressly disclaimed

* The council of *Trent*, by her interpreter *Andradius*, thus expresses herself; *Christus obedientia sua non meruit credentibus in ipsum salutem et vitam æternam; sed hoc tantummodo meruit, quod propter ipsum infunditur nobis charitas inhærens; ut illa demum sit, quæ hominem Deo non tantum gratum, sed pergratum; non tantum acceptum, sed peracceptum reddat ad vitam æternam.* Vid. Chemnit. Exam. Conc. Trident. p. 146.

claimed it. Speaking of CHRIST and his precious blood-ſhedding, ſhe adds; "Whereby *alone* we are "made partakers of the kingdom of heaven."

"Is the obedience of CHRIST inſufficient to ac-"compliſh our juſtification?"—Here you would correct both the language, and the doctrine. The language: for you ſay, "Rather I would aſk, Is the "death of CHRIST inſufficient to purchaſe it?"—To purchaſe juſtification, you ſuppoſe, is more proper and expreſſive, than to accompliſh. As this may ſeem a ſtrife of words, I ſhall diſmiſs it without much ſolicitude. Only I would tranſiently obſerve, that to accompliſh, denotes more than to purchaſe. It denotes the conſtituent cauſe; what the ſchoolmen call, the matter of juſtification, or the very thing which effects it. If your favourite phraſe implies all this, let it have the pre-eminence.

Next, you correct the doctrine, by ſaying, "*I* "*would rather aſk, Is the* death *of CHRIST* inſuffi-"cient *to purchaſe juſtification?*"—I anſwer, If you conſider the death of CHRIST, as excluſive of his obedience, it is inſufficient. If you do not, there is no great reaſon for your ſtarting a doubt, where we both are agreed. And indeed it is ſcarce worth my while to take notice of it. I will therefore return to the diſtinction, which you think proper to make, between accompliſhing and purchaſing juſtification.—Why, Sir, would you ſet aſide the former phraſe? Does it not imply, that which juſtifies? that very thing, which commends us to GOD? that *very righteouſneſs*, in which we ſtand accepted before him? Does not this way of expreſſing, guard moſt effectually againſt the errors of Popery, and exclude all coefficiency of faith, of works, or any thing elſe whatever?—I ſaid, the errors of Popery. For a *Popiſh* ſynod will allow, that we are not juſtified without the righteouſneſs of CHRIST, by which he hath merited juſtification for us; but declares, at the ſame time,

If

If any man ſhall ſay, we are formally righteous, by that very righteouſneſs, let him be accurſed.—According to this, which is no very good confeſſion, the righteouſneſs of CHRIST purchaſes, but does not accompliſh; it merits our juſtification, but does not conſtitute our juſtifying righteouſneſs. See, Sir, whither your refinements are leading you.

The ſaints in glory, ſays *Aſpaſio*, aſcribe the whole of their ſalvation to the blood of the LAMB. "So "do I," replies Mr *Weſley;* "and yet I believe, he "obtained for all a poſſibility of ſalvation."—Is this objection pertinent? Does *Aſpaſio*'s aſſertion contradict your belief? Does it not comprize, all that you avouch, and much more? Is it poſſible, that Mr *Weſley*, who is ſuch a maſter of logic, ſhould argue in this manner? "The ſaints in glory aſcribe all their ſal-"vation to CHRIST's blood; therefore he did not "obtain a poſſibility of ſalvation for all men."—What a forced concluſion is this! What wild reaſoning is here! Such premiſes, and ſuch an inference, will probably incline the reader to think of a ſun-beam and a clod, connected with bands of ſmoke.

If you was determined to make this paſſage faulty, you ſhould have oppoſed it with the following declaration of your faith; "Yet I believe, that CHRIST "obtained *no more than* a poſſibility of ſalvation for "any." Then you would have ſomething ſuited to your purpoſe; but not agreeable, either to ſound ſenſe, or ſound doctrine.—Not to *ſound ſenſe*. Your poſſibility of ſalvation is, if people perform the conditions. How then can they aſcribe *the whole* glory to CHRIST? At this rate, they do a piece of injuſtice to their own reſolution and diligence; as theſe, by fulfilling the conditions, had a hand in obtaining the reward, theſe ought to have a ſhare in receiving the honour.—Not to *ſound doctrine*.—*Aſpaſio* believes much more than a poſſibility of ſalvation by *JESUS CHRIST*. He believes a full and complete ſalvation; according to

that

that noble text, *It is finiſhed.* A ſalvation, not to be acquired, but abſolutely given; according to that precious ſcripture, *GOD hath given to us eternal life.* Not upon ſome terms or pre-requiſites, but without any condition at all; according to that moſt gracious invitation, *Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.*—This I look upon as ſound doctrine. But will your notion of a conditional ſalvation, propoſed by way of bargain, and granted upon terms, comport with this *gift of grace?*

No more than *a poſſibility* of ſalvation!—Yes, Sir, *CHRIST* obtained a great and a free ſalvation. *Great;* for it comprizes the pardon of all ſin, original and actual; a reſtoration to entire and unalterable favour; together with a title to everlaſting life and glory.—This is ſuch a proviſion for our happineſs, as becomes the immenſe goodneſs, and inconceivable majeſty of an incarnate GOD; ſuch as not only ſupplies our wants, and ſatisfies our deſires, but ſurpaſſes our very wiſhes; tranſporting us with wonder, and filling us with joy.—To accompliſh all this, we may reaſonably ſuppoſe, nothing leſs could be ſufficient, than the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of HIM, who is gone into heaven, angels, and authorities, and powers being made ſubject unto him.—Since this matchleſs ranſom has been paid; ſince theſe grand conditions are performed; there is no obſtruction from the divine juſtice, or the divine truth. All that ineffable and eternal bleſſedneſs is now become *free;* is granted to ſinners, to rebels, to the moſt unworthy; they are allowed, yea, invited to receive it, to poſſeſs it, to rejoice in it as their own portion; and without the proviſo of any good thing in themſelves, purely on account of their SAVIOUR's all-ſufficient work.

I read in ſacred hiſtory of *Eleazer the ſon of Dodo the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David; how he aroſe, and ſmote the Philiſtines, until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto his ſword; and the LORD*

LORD wrought a great victory that day; and the people returned after him only to spoil. And were not these mighty men typical, faintly typical of our almighty REDEEMER? Did not *JESUS* also arise, and work a great victory? Has he not triumphed gloriously over sin, and all our enemies? And what have we to do, but only to return, and divide the spoil, and share the benefits of his conquest?—May we not boldly say? "My sin is done away, because *CHRIST* "has bore it on the cursed tree. I stand accepted be- "fore GOD, because *CHRIST* has finished the righ- "teousness, which renders me unblameable and un- "reprovable. I shall receive the HOLY GHOST, "because *CHRIST* is my advocate; and prays the "FATHER, that he will give me another comfort- "er. This sacred comforter, by shewing me the "riches of *CHRIST*, will more and more sanctify "my nature." To think and live in this manner, is to take the spoil after our victorious leader.

Let me close and confirm this sentiment, with a passage from that inimitable penman, the prophet *Isaiah*; who, for his remarkably-clear views of CHRIST, may almost be admitted into the number of evangelists; and, for his exquisitely-fine descriptions of CHRIST, greatly exceeds all orators and all poets. *Who is this that cometh from* Edom, *with dyed garments from* Bozrah? *This that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength?—I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save.—Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?—I have trodden the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with me.*

The prophet, like one thrown into a sudden surprise, with a beautiful abruptness, cries out, *Who is this?* What extraordinary appearance discovers itself to my sight? Is it a human, or a divine form, *that* I behold? He *cometh from Edom* the country, *from Bozrah* the capital,

capital, of our profeſſed national enemies. Is he for us, or for our adverſaries?—The firſt queſtion ſeems to proceed from a diſtant and indiſtinct view. He then takes a nearer ſurvey, and deſcribes the wonderful perſonage with greater particularity. This that cometh with *dyed garments*, like ſome terrible and victorious warrior, that has ſcarcely ſheathed the ſword of ſlaughter; who is all encrimſoned, and ſtill reeking with the blood of the ſlain.

The viſion becomes clearer and clearer. I ſee him (adds the rapturous prophet) *glorious in his apparel*. Highly graceful, as well as extremely awful. Bearing in his aſpect, in his whole perſon, in his very dreſs, the marks of tranſcendent dignity. *Travelling in the greatneſs of his ſtrength*. Not faint with toil, nor wearied with the fatigue of the dreadful action; but like one, that is indefatigable in the zeal, and irreſiſtible in his power; and therefore ſtill preſſing forwards, to new victories; ſtill going on, from conquering to conquer.

The majeſtic object is, all this while, advancing. At length, he approaches near enough, to hold a conference with this devout inquirer. One would naturally expect, that his ſpeech ſhould be like his aſpect, alarming and tremendous. But grace is on his tongue, and his lips drop balm. *I that ſpeak in righteouſneſs:* all whoſe words are faithfulneſs and truth; an immoveable foundation for the faith of my people. *That ſpeak of righteouſneſs* *: of that myſterious righteouſneſs, which is the delight of my FATHER, and the life of the world. To bring in which, is the deſign of my appearance on earth, and to reveal it is the office of my SPIRIT. By means of this righteouſneſs, I am *mighty to ſave:* to ſave thee; to ſave any loſt ſinner; to ſave them, as with the arm of omnipotence, beyond all that they can think, even to the very uttermoſt.

* *Vox* רבר loqui *conſtructa cum præfixa* ב, *notat paſſim, phraſi ſacra, loqui de re.*

Here the prophet ſeems to be ſomewhat at a loſs, and takes leave to renew his inquiry. If thou art come, not to deſtroy mens lives, but to ſave; *wherefore art thou red in thine apparel, and thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat?* Theſe indicate, not deliverance, but deſtruction. Theſe are tokens, not of forbearing mercy, but of inexorable vengeance.—'Tis true, replies the illuſtrious hero, *I have trodden the wine-preſs* *; I have cruſhed my foes; I have trampled them under my feet; and repentance was hid from

* *Trodden the wine-preſs.*—I can hardly forbear taking notice of the great impropriety, with which this text and this metaphor are frequently uſed by our theological writers. They apply both to *CHRIST*, as bruiſed by his almighty FATHER; and bearing the weight of that indignation, which was due to the ſins of mankind. Nothing is more common, than to make this text deſcriptive of his agony in the garden.—If indeed it had been ſaid, *I am trodden in the wine-preſs*, the image might not be improper. But when it is ſaid, *I have trodden*, nothing can be more unſuitable to a ſtate of humiliation and ſuffering. This phraſe evidently denotes conqueſt and triumph; enemies vanquiſhed and totally deſtroyed. It ſhould never therefore be applied to the agonizing, but to the triumphant SAVIOUR; not to *JESUS* proſtrate on the ground, but to *JESUS* making his foes his footſtool.

As I have taken leave to animadvert upon a common miſtake, I would alſo take liberty to pay merit its due honour; by recommending to my reader a poetical verſion of this paſſage, given us by Dr *Lowth*, in his very elegant work, entitled *De ſacra poeſi Hebræorum*. Where he underſtands the text, in the ſenſe ſuggeſted above; and tranſlates it, in the very ſpirit of *Virgil*. As the lines are few, and the book may not be in the hands of all my readers, I will preſent them with a tranſcript.

——— Ille patris vires indutus et iram,
Dira rubens graditur, per ſtragem et fracta potentum
Agmina, prona ſolo; proſtratiſque hoſtibus ultor
Inſultat; ceu præla nova ſpumantia muſto
Exercens, ſalit attritas calcator in uvas,
Congeſtamque ſtruem ſubigit: cæde atra recenti
Crura madent, rorantque inſperſæ ſanguine veſtes.

from my eyes. But thy enemies were the object of mine indignation. Sin, and death, and hell, are the vanquished adversaries. It is their blood, that is sprinkled upon my garments, and that stains all my raiment.—This victory I have gained, by myself *alone*. Being infinitely too great in my power, to want an associate; and infinitely too jealous of my honour, to accept of any assistance. *Of the people*, whether in heaven or on earth, *there was none with me;* to afford the least succour, or to take the least share in the glorious work. The salvation of sinners; their deliverance from wrath, and their redemption to GOD, is, in all its parts, my act, even mine, and mine only. Yours be all the benefit; mine all the glory.

The terms of acceptance for *fallen* man, were, a full satisfaction to the *divine justice*, and a *complete conformity* to the divine law. "This," says Mr *Wesley* to *Aspasio*, "you take for granted, but I can-"not allow."—That *Aspasio* does not take these points for granted, I thought, even his enemies would confess. That he has attempted, at least, to make good his opinion, all the world, besides yourself, Sir, will acknowledge. What else is the design of dialogue the *third* and *fourth?* what else is aimed at, in dialogue the *seventh*, *eighth*, and *ninth?* The former treat largely of the full satisfaction given to divine justice. The latter treat still more largely of the conformity demanded by the divine law, and yielded by the divine *JESUS*.

These things, however, "you cannot allow."—Not allow a full satisfaction of divine justice to be necessary? Are you not then acceding to the *Socinian?* Not allow a complete conformity to the divine law to be necessary! Are you not then warping to the *Antinomian?* See, Sir, how you approach the rocks, both on the right hand, and on the left. May the KEEPER of *Israel* preserve yourself and your followers, from suffering shipwreck!—Every one, I think, must al-

low what you deny, who believes the divine juſtice to be infinite, and the divine law to be unalterable. A juſtice, that will admit of any ſatisfaction, leſs than complete, can never be deemed infinite. And if the divine law can reſt ſatisfied with an obedience that is defective, it is not ſo venerable as the law of the *Medes* and *Perſians*.

"*The* terms *of acceptance for fallen man*," you ſay, "*are* repentance *and* faith."—I muſt own, I don't much like the expreſſion *terms*, unleſs it be referred to the mediation of *CHRIST*. And you yourſelf, if you would act conſiſtently, ſhould not be over-fond of it, becauſe it is not ſcriptural. Tho' for my own part, I have no quarrel againſt the word, becauſe it is not the exact phraſeology of ſcripture, but becauſe I diſlike the idea it conveys. Shall *we* treat with the DEITY, as free ſtates or ſovereign princes treat with each other? the one obtaining from the other, peace or ſome advantageous conceſſion, by complying with his terms?

To confirm your opinion, that "the terms of ac-"ceptance for fallen man, are repentance and faith," you produce the following text; *Repent ye, and believe the goſpel*.—Here you write, like a man of ſenſe; who knows what juſt diſputation means. You lay aſide your *certainlies*, your *undoubtedlies*, your *unqueſtionablies;* and urge a proof from ſcripture.—Whether you rightly underſtand, and duly apply this proof, muſt now be inquired.

Repent ye, and believe the goſpel. This may be the meaning of the exhortation. *Repent;* relinquiſh all your wrong notions, relating to the way and manner of finding acceptance with the DEITY. *Believe the goſpel;* which opens a moſt unexpected avenue, for the communication of this bleſſing; which brings you tidings of a ſalvation, fully procured by the incarnate GOD, and freely offered to the unworthy ſinner.—The word you know, is μετανοειτε. Which, in its primary

primary ſignification, denotes not ſo much a reformation of conduct, as a change of ſentiment.

Suppoſe it to ſignify a reformation of conduct. The meaning then may be as follows. *Repent;* forſake all your vices, and all your follies; mortify every evil temper, and renounce every evil way. In order to render this practicable, *believe the goſpel;* wherein a SAVIOUR is preached and diſplayed; who makes peace for ſuch offenders; reconciles them to GOD; and obtains eternal redemption for them. This will ſweetly withdraw your affections from iniquity, and ſweetly attach them to the bleſſed GOD. Whereas, without this powerful expedient, you will never be delivered from the pleaſing witchcraft of your luſts. Sin will always have dominion over you, ſo long as you are under the law, and not under grace.—Repentance, thus underſtood, is not the condition of obtaining ſalvation, but the fruit of ſalvation obtained.

Beſides, if repentance be a gift, it cannot be a term or condition. He muſt be a ſtranger to the import of language, and the common ideas of mankind, who will take upon him to affirm the latter; and he muſt be yet a greater ſtranger to the holy word of GOD, who will offer to deny the former.—*CHRIST is exalted*, ſaith the apoſtle, *to give repentance*. Not to require it, as a condition of bleſſedneſs; but to give it, as a moſt eminent bleſſing. Not require repentance of fallen man, who is not able to think a good thought; but give it, from his unſearchable riches; and work it, by his almighty power.

You ſay, "the terms of acceptance for fallen man, "are, *&c.*"—Methinks, I ſhould be glad to know, what you mean by *fallen* man. Do you mean (as you tell us, in your collection of ſermons) "one dead to GOD, "and all the things of GOD? having no more power "to perform the actions of a living Chriſtian, than "a dead body to perform the functions of a living "man?" What terms, I beſeech you, can ſuch a one fulfil?

fulfil? Be they ever so difficult, or ever so easy, it maketh no difference. The hand stiff in death, is no more able to move a feather, than to remove a mountain.—Whatever, therefore, others may affirm, you, Sir, cannot talk of repentance, to be exercised by *fallen* man, until he is quickened and enabled by fellowship with *CHRIST*, the living and life-giving head. Unless you chuse, either to contradict your own assertion, that fallen man is absolutely dead to all good; or else think proper to maintain, that the dead may not only act, but perform some of the most excellent acts, and important offices.

You should likewise, Sir, if you would write correctly and argue forcibly, have told us, what you mean by faith. Otherwise, you may intend one thing, and I another, even while we both use the same word. In this case, our dispute might be as endless, as it must be fruitless.

By faith I mean, what St *John* calls, *a receiving of* CHRIST; a receiving of him and his benefits, as they are freely given, in the word of grace and truth. If this, which is the apostolical, be a proper definition, then it seems not to come under the denomination of a condition. They must be excessive refiners indeed, who would call my receiving a rich present, the terms or conditions of possessing it; or would esteem my eating at a plenteous feast, the terms and conditions of enjoying it. Is not this to subtilize, till sound sense is lost?

Faith, according to St *Paul*, is a persuasion, that *CHRIST loved me, and gave himself for me*. Where is any trace or any hint of conditionality, in this description? I don't hear the apostle saying, He loved me, provided I repent; he gave himself for me, in case I think this, or do that: but he gave himself for me, when I was ungodly, and *had* performed no conditions; when I was without strength, and *could* perform no conditions.—Thus he gave himself for me,

that

that I might have remiſſion of ſins thro' his blood; and eternal life, thro' his righteouſneſs.—Believing theſe delightful truths, and receiving theſe heavenly privileges, I love my moſt adorable Benefactor; and abhor thoſe iniquities, for which he wept, and groaned, and died. That love of *CHRIST*, is vital holineſs; and this abhorrence of ſin, is practical repentance. And both are the fruits, therefore cannot be the conditions, of ſalvation by *JESUS*.

Some holy men and excellent writers, I confeſs, have not ſcrupled to call faith and repentance the conditions of our ſalvation. Yet I cannot prevail on myſelf to admire or approve the language. I fear, it tends to embarraſs the ſincere ſoul; to darken the luſtre of grace; and to afford too much occaſion for boaſting.

To embarraſs the ſincere ſoul.—For, if I am ſaved on conditions, this will naturally divert my attention from the grand, and all-ſufficient cauſe of juſtification, the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*; which alone gives ſolid comfort. Inſtead of delighting myſelf in the LORD REDEEMER, I ſhall be engaged in an anxious concern about the ſuppoſed conditions. Whether I have performed them? Whether I have performed them aright? Whether there may not be ſome latent defect, that ſpoils all, and renders my labour fruitleſs? The more ſerious our minds are, and the more tender our conſciences, the more ſhall we be liable to perplexity and diſquietude on this head.

It eclipſes the luſtre of grace.—*Ye are ſaved by grace*, ſays the oracle of heaven. But if ſalvation be upon conditions, it cannot be of grace. It muſt, in ſome meaſure at leaſt, be of works. Since it depends upon working the conditions, it is obtained by working the conditions; and the candidate has reaſon to look principally unto his performance of the conditions. They are to him, by incomparable degrees, the moſt important point. Becauſe, without their all-ſignificant interpoſition,

interpoſition, every thing elſe is as nothing. Even GOD's everlaſting love, and CHRIST's everlaſting righteouſneſs, are, till the conditions are fulfilled, but cyphers without the initial figure.

It affords too much occaſion for boaſting.—May I not, in this caſe, thank my own application and induſtry? They, they exerted themſelves ſucceſsfully; and behold! the promiſed reward is mine. What then ſhould hinder me from ſacrificing unto my own net, and burning incenſe unto my own drag?—At this door the notion of merit will unavoidably creep in. Becauſe my performance of the condition is meritorious of the *covenanted* reward. So far meritorious, that the reward is my due. I may demand it, as a debt. And it will be an act of apparent injuſtice to with-hold it.—But ſhall theſe things be ſaid unto the ALMIGHTY? Will theſe things redound to *the praiſe of the glory of his grace?* Do theſe things hide vanity from man; or conſiſt with a ſalvation, that is *without money, or without price?* Not quite ſo well, I believe, yourſelf will acknowledge, as the following lines.

" Let the world their virtue boaſt,
" Their works of righteouſneſs;
" I, a wretch undone and loſt,
" Am freely ſav'd by grace:
" Other title I diſclaim,
" This, *only this* is all my plea;
" I the chief of ſinners am,
" But *JESUS* died for me.

" Fallen man," you ſay, " is juſtified, not by perfect " obedience, but by faith."—" Not by perfect obe- " dience." Ah, Sir! if you had remembered the immutability of GOD, and the ſpirituality of his law, you would not have challenged this expreſſion.—" But by faith." Here, 'tis true, you uſe the language of ſcripture. Nevertheleſs it behoves a watch-

man

man in *Iſrael*, to ſhew how the language of ſcripture may be abuſed. Faith, you allow, is imputed to us for righteouſneſs; therefore (you infer) not the righteouſneſs or perfect obedience of *CHRIST*. This, if you mean any thing, or would ſpeak any thing to the purpoſe, muſt be your way of arguing. So you would ſet faith and *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs at variance. The former ſhall exclude the latter from its office. Whereas, the former is only the pitcher at the fountain, while the latter is the very water of life; is that bleſſed, glorious, heavenly expedient, which, received by faith, juſtifies, ſanctifies, ſaves.

According to your goſpel, faith will ſay to the righteouſneſs of the REDEEMER, "Depart hence. I "have no need of thee. I myſelf act as the juſtifying "righteouſneſs. *I ſtand in the ſtead of perfect obedi-* "*ence, in order to acceptance with GOD* *."—To this may we not reply? Was faith then crucified for you? has faith magnified the divine law? or is it by means of faith, that not one jot or tittle of its precepts paſs unfulfilled?

If faith, in this ſenſe, is imputed for righteouſneſs, how can you ſubſcribe that emphatical article, which declares, "We are accounted righteous before GOD, "*only* for the merit of our *LORD* and *SAVIOUR* "*JESUS CHRIST*." Surely, Sir, you are account- "ed righteous, for the ſake of *that*, whatever it be, which ſtands in the ſtead of perfect obedience. That, whatever it be, may claim the honour; and to that juſtice itſelf cannot but award the prize.

If your notion be true, the believer ought to have his own faith principally in view. Whatever preſents me perfectly obedient before GOD, is my greateſt good; is my choiceſt portion; the beſt foundation for my hope, my peace, my joy. To this, therefore, ſo long

* Theſe are Mr *Weſley*'s own words, in his explication of this very doctrine. See his ſermon on *the righteouſneſs of faith*. Vol. I. p. 111.

long as I know my own intereſt, I muſt chiefly look. Whereas, *look unto* JESUS, is the direction of the HOLY GHOST. Look unto his perfect atonement, and complete righteouſneſs, *and be ſaved*, is the grand unchangeable edict, iſſued from the throne of grace.

Perhaps, you will ſay, Are not the words of ſcripture expreſsly on my ſide? *Faith is imputed for righteouſneſs*. True. But is the ſenſe of ſcripture on your ſide? Suppoſe, I ſhould undertake to prove, that *David* was purged from guilt, by the hyſſop which groweth on the wall; this you would think a wild and an impracticable attempt. But ſhould I not have the words of ſcripture expreſsly on my ſide? *Purge me with hyſſop, and I ſhall be clean*. Yet ſhould I not have the leaſt countenance imaginable from the ſpirit and ſenſe of thoſe ſacred writings. Has the hyſſop, a mean worthleſs ſhrub, any kind of fitneſs, to ſtand in the ſtead of the ſacrificial blood, and make the atonement for ſin? No more fitneſs has faith, to ſtand in the ſtead of perfect obedience; to act as our juſtifying righteouſneſs; or procure our acceptance with GOD.

"What *CHRIST* has done."—Here Mr *Weſley* himſelf ſpeaks of what *CHRIST* has *done*. He repreſents it by a very magnificent image. He lays it as the foundation of that firſt and moſt comprehenſive bleſſing, juſtification. In this I moſt cordially agree with him. Hoping, that we ſhall unanimouſly join, to defend this important ſentiment, againſt all oppoſition; and endeavour to diſplay the REDEEMER's work, as well as his paſſion, in all its glorious excellency.

"What *CHRIST* has done is the foundation of "our juſtification, not the term or condition."—The prophet *Iſaiah* had other notions of this matter; *If thou ſhalt make his ſoul an offering for ſin, he ſhall ſee his ſeed*. *If* * is the hypothetic language; denotes a term;

* *Iſ.* liii. 10. אם תשים, Si poſueris. *Vocula* אם *valet* conditionem,

term; expreſſes a condition; on the performance of which, the MESSIAH *ſhould ſee his ſeed;* ſhould have a numberleſs multitude of ſinners, pardoned and renewed; born again of the SPIRIT, and made heirs of ſalvation. The grand term, on which all theſe bleſſings depend, and by which they are made ſure to believers, is, the pouring out of the MESSIAH's ſoul, as a ſacrifice for their ſins, and a ranſom for their perſons.

"The foundation, not the condition."—Methinks you ſhould offer ſome reaſon for this diſtinction. Eſpecially, ſince St *Paul* aſſures us, that *CHRIST* is, in the work of ſalvation, not this or that only, but he is ALL. Eſpecially, ſince *CHRIST* himſelf declares, *I am*, in that grandeſt of all affairs, the redemption of ſinners, *the beginning and the ending*. And well he may be ſo, ſince he is, as it follows in the text, *the ALMIGHTY*.

Your meaning, I preſume, is, What *CHRIST* has done, is a foundation for the influence and ſignificancy of our own doings. That they, under the notion of terms and conditions, may come for a ſhare, and be his co-adjutors in the great work. This was the doctrine, eſtabliſhed by the council of *Trent;* this is the doctrine, ſtill maintained in the conclave of *Rome;* and is, perhaps, of all their abominations the moſt refined, yet not the leaſt diſhonourable to our SAVIOUR. It bears the greateſt oppoſition to the truth of his goſpel, and the freeneſs of his redemption.

I have heard it inſinuated, that Mr *Weſley* is a Jeſuit in diſguiſe. This inſinuation I rejected, as the groſſeſt calumny; I abhorred, as falſehood itſelf. I acquit you, Sir, from the charge of being a Jeſuit or a Papiſt. But no body, I apprehend, can acquit

conditionem, *et recte vertitur per* ſi. *Patet enim clariſſime*, conditionem *hic conjungi cum* privilegio, *præſtita conditione obtinendo*. VITRIN.

your principles from halting between Proteſtantiſm and Popery. They have ſtolen the unhallowed fire, and are infected with the leaven of Antichriſt. You have unhappily adopted ſome ſpecious Papiſtical tenets, and are liſtening to the mother of abominations, more than you are aware.

Amidſt all your miſtakes (and from miſtakes who is exempt?) I verily believe, your principal aim is, the honour of *CHRIST*, and the edification of ſouls. Therefore I ſpeak the more freely. Was you a bigot to ſelfiſhneſs, or a devotee to vain-glory, ſuch liberty might be diſpleaſing. But I am perſuaded better things of Mr *Weſley*. He has publicly declared, that "wherein ſoever he is miſtaken, his mind is open to "conviction; and he ſincerely deſires to be better in-"formed." This is written in the true ſpirit of a Chriſtian. To this ſpirit I addreſs myſelf. Begging of you, Sir, with the ſincerity and tenderneſs of a brother, to conſider theſe hints impartially; leſt, being miſled yourſelf, you miſlead your thouſands and ten thouſands.

In the mean time, I hope, you will not take it amiſs, if, to my affectionate intreaties, I add my earneſt prayers: That you, Sir, and your people, may be in the number of thoſe *bleſſed men, unto whom GOD imputeth righteouſneſs without works*. Which I take to be the firſt and great evangelical privilege; as, I am very ſure, it is the richeſt benefit, I know how to crave, either for you, or for your moſt, *&c.*

LETTER VII.

REV. SIR,

PERSONS ſkilled in the diſſection of animal bodies, frequently mention *comparative anatomy*. May I borrow the term, and apply it to theology? I do then freely declare, that in caſe you cenſured *Aſpaſio*,

ſpaſio, for points of divinity, *comparatively ſmall*, you ſhould have no oppoſition nor any check from this pen.

Some people, for inſtance, are of opinion, that the belief of a parent is conſiderably beneficial to his children. That, when St *Paul* ſays to the anxious jailor, *Believe on the* LORD JESUS, *and thou ſhalt be ſaved, and thy houſe;* he promiſes ſome ſpecial good, that ſhould redound to the man's houſehold, from his own receival of *CHRIST*. It ſeems, indeed, that the apoſtle muſt intend ſomething of this nature; more than barely to ſay, thy family alſo, provided they follow thy example, ſhall obtain ſalvation with eternal glory. If this were the whole of his meaning, he need not have confined it to the jailor's domeſtics, but might have extended it to all the inhabitants of *Philippi*.

Such tenets, whether admitted or rejected, affect not the *main* point. Men may embrace which ſide of the queſtion they think proper, and yet be found in the faith of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. But errors, relating to *that righteouſneſs*, which is the one efficient cauſe of juſtification; in which alone GOD is well pleaſed, and all his perfections glorified; which is the only ſpring of ſolid peace, and true godlineſs; ſuch errors are extremely pernicious. Theſe we muſt withſtand with reſolution and zeal. We may not give place to their encroachment, no, not for an hour. The former may be compared to a fly, ſettled on the diſh; the latter are more like poiſon, mixed with our food. To diſlodge *that*, may not be amiſs. But to prevent, or expel, or antidote *this*, is abſolutely neceſſary. In the former number, perhaps, the reader will rank your obſervation, which follows. But as I have undertaken to follow you ſtep by ſtep, I muſt not diſregard it.

Aſpaſio, ſpeaking of *David*, expreſſes a high eſteem for that hero, king, and ſaint. Allowing, that his

eſteem

eſteem were carried a little too far; where would have been the great hurt, or the grievous offence? How, Sir, could this have led to "unſettled notions in re-"ligion *?"—I was inclined to anſwer your reflections, as the hero himſelf anſwered his cenſorious brother, *Is there not a cauſe?* Then paſſing on to another ſubject, as he, perfectly maſter of himſelf, and nobly ſuperior to the affront, turned to another perſon. But as you ſeem to have injured *David*, and not done juſtice to the truth, I ſhall hardly be excuſed, if I diſmiſs the matter, without ſome more particular notice.

GOD himſelf dignifies *David* with the moſt exalted of all characters, ſays *Aſpaſio*.—"Far, very far "from *it*," ſays Mr *Weſley*. "We have more exalted "characters than *David*'s."—Where, Sir? Shew me, in any of the ſaints, or in any of the ſacred writers, a more devout, or a more divine ſpirit, than that which breathes in the penman of the *Pſalms*. For my own part, I know nothing ſuperior to it, in any author, or in any language. Neither can I conceive a more exalted character, than the character given of *David*, *a man after GOD's own heart*. If GOD be an unerring judge, if *his* approbation be the infallible ſtandard, this deſcription muſt expreſs the moſt conſummate human worth. Say whatever you will of a perſon, it does not, it cannot, exceed this moſt illuſtrious teſtimony.

"But this is ſaid of *David* in a particular reſpect."—Ay? notwithſtanding the HOLY SPIRIT has declared concerning him; *a man after mine own heart, who ſhall perform* all *my will*. If you was expounding this text, would you think it right to ſay? He ſhall perform *all my will*, that is, he ſhall ſerve me in *ſome particular reſpect*.—"It was not ſaid, with regard to "his

* The reader will pleaſe to remember, that the pamphlet, which contains the remarks under conſideration, is entitled *A Preſervative againſt unſettled notions in religion.*

" his whole character." No! not when the SPIRIT of inſpiration has borne this witneſs to *David; His heart was perfect with the LORD his GOD.* Could his heart be perfect, yet not influence his *whole* conduct?—" But it was ſaid in the ſecond or third year " of *Saul*'s reign." Therefore it was not applicable to him, during the future years of his life. This is the inference you would draw. But can you really think it a juſt one? or would you call *that* perſon, a man after GOD's own heart, who is ſingularly pious in the days of his youth, but ſwerves and declines in his advanced age?

Notwithſtanding all theſe remonſtrances, you puſh matters to the utmoſt; as tho' it was a point of the laſt importance, to prove *David* an errant back-ſlider. With this view, you add; " But was he a man af-" ter GOD's own heart, all his life, or in all parti-" culars? So far from it, that"—Stop, Sir, I beſeech you. And, before you ſpeak unadviſedly with your lips, hear what the LORD himſelf replies, to both your interrogatories; *David did that which was* right, *in the eyes of the LORD, and turned not aſide* from any thing *that he commanded him*, all the days *of his life, ſave only in the matter of Uriah the Hittite.* Surely, you was not aware, that ſuch things are written in the book of GOD. Otherwiſe, you would not have contradicted them, with ſo much boldneſs. I will, therefore, put the moſt charitable conſtruction upon your procedure, and ſay with the apoſtle; *I wot, that through inadvertence you did it.*

There is not a juſt man upon earth, that ſinneth not, is a text quoted by *Aſpaſio*. Upon which Mr *Weſley* obſerves; " *Solomon* might truly ſay ſo, before *CHRIST* " came."—According to this inſinuation, what *Solomon* ſaid in his *Proverbs* and other books, was ſaid only by a ſhort-ſighted mortal: who might adapt his inſtructions to the preſent œconomy; but was not able to plan a ſyſtem of morals for futurity. Where-

as,

as, I always ſuppoſed, that his writings were dictated by that infinitely wiſe SPIRIT, before whom all times are preſent, and to whom all events are known. Agreeably to this ſuppoſition, *Paul* informs us, that *whatſoever things were written aforetime*, whether by *Solomon* or any other prophet, *were written for our learning*.—No; ſuggeſts Mr *Weſley*. Here is ſomething written, which appertains not to us Chriſtians. We are above it.—Are you ſo? Your reaſon for theſe lofty apprehenſions? Why, "St *John* af-"firms, *Whoſoever is born of GOD, ſinneth not*."

True; he ſinneth not habitually; it is not his cuſtomary practice. Thus the paſſage is explained by another apoſtle; *Sin*, tho' it may make inſurrection, does *not reign in his mortal body*. Tho' it may aſſault him, yet it *has not dominion over him*.—

Again, he *ſinneth not*, is the ſame way of ſpeaking, and to be underſtood with the ſame limitation, as that text in *Job*, *HE giveth not account of any of his matters*. How Sir, would you interpret theſe words? It is undeniably certain, that ſometimes GOD giveth account of his matters. He gave it to *Abraham*, when *Sodom*, and *Gomorrah*, and the cities about them, were to be deſtroyed with brimſtone and fire from heaven. You would therefore, I preſume, in ſome ſuch qualified ſenſe expound the paſſage; "*He giveth not account*; "it is not his uſual way. Not a cuſtomary procedure "with the ſupreme Diſpoſer of things. He generally "requireth his creatures to tranſact with him upon "truſt; to give themſelves up with an implicit re-"ſignation to the veracity of his word, and the "good-pleaſure of his will."—The harmony of ſcripture, and the neceſſity of the caſe, call upon you to give the ſame expoſition of the text before us.

I ſaid, the neceſſity of the caſe. For you will pleaſe to obſerve, the thing affirmed, is affirmed in ſuch a manner, that it muſt be applied to every individual Chriſtian, and at the very inſtant of his commencing a true Chriſtian. The apoſtle ſays not, a ſaint of the

the first rank, but *whosoever*. He says not, After such a one has been, for a considerable time, born of GOD; but whosoever *is born*, is but just entered upon the desirable state, *sinneth not*. The character belongs to the very weakest believer. The description is suited even to babes in *CHRIST*. To suppose, therefore, that it implies an entire freedom from sin, infirmity, and defect, is to suppose, that all the children of the regeneration are born in a state of manhood; or rather, are more than men, even while they are infants of a day.

Our sense of the passage is free from this impropriety, yet gives no countenance to immorality. *Whosoever is born of GOD sinneth not*. He does not, he cannot sin, like the devil, or one actuated by the diabolical nature. This interpretation is rendered probable, by the apostle's antithesis; *He that committeth sin is of the devil*. It is rendered necessary, by the preceding remark, and by the experience of Christians.—The text, thus interpreted, is applicable to the babe in *CHRIST*, as well as to the adult. Though either of them may fall, through the violence or surprise of temptation; yet neither of them can live and die in allowed iniquity, whether of omission or commission. They cannot have a settled love to any known sin, nor can they commit it with the full consent of their will.

Solomon, when he uttered those humbling words *, had his eye upon what you somewhere call, "the inconceivable purity and spirituality of the sacred precepts;" upon that universal obedience which they require, in every the minutest instance.—That we do nothing, great or small, which they forbid; leave nothing undone, in heart or life, which they enjoin.—That we do all this, in the most perfect degree. Not only serving the LORD, but serving him with all our strength. Not only loving our neighbour, but loving him as our own soul. Ever exercising the

* Eccl. vii. 20.

utmoſt regularity of affection and deſire; even maintaining the utmoſt rectitude of temper and thought.—If you alſo, Sir, had your eye fixed upon the ſame law, as it delineates and demands this "inconceivable "purity and ſpirituality; you would not ſcruple to acquieſce in the wiſe man's confeſſion, nor think much to adopt it as your own. You would acknowledge it calculated, not only for the *Moſaic* æra, and the meridian of *Judea*, but for all times and all places; till thoſe new heavens, and that new earth appear, wherein dwelleth conſummate righteouſneſs.

In many things we offend all. "That St *James* does "not ſpeak this of himſelf, or real Chriſtians, will "clearly appear to all, who impartially conſider the "context."—I wiſh, Sir, you had made this appear to *one;* even to him, whom you honour with this addreſs. Then I ſhould not have been obliged to aſk, Of whom ſpeaketh the apoſtle?—He ſays, *My brethren.* Does not this imply true believers, and real Chriſtians?—He ſays, *We teachers* *. Does not this comprehend himſelf, and deſcribe his office?—He adds, *We all.* If he himſelf, and real Chriſtians, are not included in this moſt comprehenſive clauſe; I would deſire to know, in what terms they could poſſibly be compriſed.

According to this interpretation, the arguing is juſt, and the concluſion forcible. As though he had ſaid, —"My dear brethren, though you are truly convert-"ed to Chriſtianity, yet do not unadviſedly engage "in the arduous and awful work of the miniſtry. "Remembering that we miniſters of the goſpel ſhall "be ſubject to a ſtricter judgment † than Chriſtians "in ordinary life; and if, upon trial, we are found "faithleſs, ſhall receive a heavier condemnation †.— "The danger, let me add, is very conſiderable; be-"cauſe

* The original is not κυριοι, *maſters*, but διδασκαλοι, *teachers*.

† † *Judgment*, *condemnation*— the word κριμα may be taken in both theſe ſignifications.

" cauſe ſuch is the frailty of our mortal ſtate, that " the very beſt among us, and thoſe converſant in " ſacred things, cannot always walk uprightly; but, " in many inſtances, we trip, we ſtumble, we offend."

Whereas, if neither the apoſtle himſelf nor real Chriſtians be meant, I can ſee no propriety nor force in the reaſoning. Nay, I can ſee no reaſoning at all, though the illative particle *for* evidently requires it. Nothing but a moſt inſipid and frivolous aſſertion; " For, in many things, we that are not real Chri- " ſtians offend." Is this a diſcovery worthy of apoſtolical wiſdom? Is this all that the inſpired St *James* meant to declare? You and I could have told him and his people a great deal more. Whoſoever is not a real Chriſtian offends, not in *many* things only, but in *every* thing. To ſuch a one nothing is pure. His mind and conſcience are defiled: his whole life is ſin.

We have examined this objection, as it ſtands in itſelf. Let us now take a view of it, as it may appear in its conſequences.—*In many things we offend all*, " The apoſtle ſpeaks not of himſelf, nor of real Chri- " ſtians." What fine work would our adverſaries make with the ſcriptures, if we ſhould allow them Mr *Weſley's* liberty of interpretation! Tell a *Pelagian*, that all mankind is deprived. Prove the univerſal depravity, by that abaſing text, *All we, like ſheep, have gone aſtray*. How eaſily may he reply, *All we* does not mean all mankind? The prophet ſpeaks not of himſelf, nor of virtuous perſons, but only of profane people, and men of the baſer ſort.—Tell an *Arian*, that our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* is very *GOD*. Confirm the glorious truth, by that moſt cogent text; *In HIM dwells all the fulneſs of the GODHEAD*. The heretic has nothing more to do, than, in Mr *Weſley's* manner, to anſwer, *All fulneſs* does not mean all the divine perfections, but only ſome pittance or portion of them.—Dear Sir, when-

ever you are disposed to criticise again, let me beseech you to consider a little the import of language, and the consequences of things.

Had the words been, *In many things we offend*, you might, by disregarding the context, have borrowed some slight seeming countenance for your criticism, from verse the ninth; where the apostle is supposed to personate the wicked, *Therewith curse we man*. But in the place under consideration, he enlarges the sentiment, and strengthens the language; though free from that particular crime, he was not free from this general charge. Here therefore he spares not himself; he takes shame to himself, and teaches the most upright of the human race, to plead guilty before their Judge. We the servants of GOD; we the ambassadors of *CHRIST;* we *all* *—not one excepted—in many things offend.—Where then could *they*, and O! where can *you* and *I*, look for our perfection, but only in our divinely-gracious SURETY, BRIDEGROOM, HEAD? There let us seek it, where some excellent lines (whose author you may probably know) have taught us to find it.

Now let me climb perfection's height,
And into nothing fall;
Be less than nothing in thy sight,
While CHRIST *is all in all.*

In the paragraph which begins, "O children of "*Adam*," you don't distinguish what the law is *made* to speak, according to a new scheme of divinity; and what it really *does* speak to true believers, on the principles of the gospel. Give me leave to rectify your mistakes, and to point out the manner in which you should have expressed yourself.

To rectify your mistakes—You suppose the law, upon *Aspasio's* plan, speaking to this effect: "O children "of *Adam*, you are no longer obliged to love the "LORD

* *Ne seipsos quidem excipiunt apostoli.* Bengel. in loc.

" LORD your GOD with all your heart." Indeed you are. The obligation remains, and is unalterable. But it has been fully satisfied, as the condition of life and immortality, by the believer's glorious SURETY. —" Once I insisted on absolute purity of heart. Now " I can dispense with some degrees of evil desire." No such thing. Every degree of evil desire I condemn with inexorable rigour. But every such offence has been thus condemned, and thus punished, in the flesh of your crucified LORD.—" Since *CHRIST* " has fulfilled the law for you, you need not fulfil it." Rather, you need not fulfil it, in order to the justification of your persons, or to obtain eternal life and glory. This, to you the greatest of impossibilities, has been performed in your behalf, by a MEDIATOR and a REDEEMER, to whom nothing is impossible.—" I will connive at, yea accommodate " my demands to your weakness." Not this, but what is much better, I see no sinful weaknesses in you, because they are all covered † with the resplendent robe of your SAVIOUR's righteousness; therefore I no longer curse, but bless you, and sign your title to everlasting happiness.—Thus the enmity of our nature is slain: thus the precepts, even the strictest precepts, become amiable and desirable. We love the law, which, thro' our dear REDEEMER, is no longer against us, but on our side; is a messenger of peace, and bears witness to our completeness in *CHRIST*.

The manner in which you should have expressed yourself—This is what the law speaks, according to *Aspasio*'s doctrine: " O believers in *CHRIST*, I am, like " my divine Author, consummate and unchangeable. " I did

† Psal. xxxii. 1. *Blessed is he, whose iniquities are covered.* Upon this text St *Jerom* very ingeniously, and very comfortably descants; *Quod tegitur, non videtur; quod non videtur, non imputatur; quod non imputatur, non punictur.* That which is covered, is not seen; that which is not seen, is not imputed; that which is not imputed, shall not be punished.

" did require, I do require, and ever shall require, " perfect love to GOD; perfect charity to your neighbour; and perfect holiness, both in heart and life. " Never abating one tittle of these my requirements, " I shall denounce the curse upon every disobedience; " upon the least departure from absolute perfection. " —But this is your comfort, believers, that the " curse is executed upon your most holy SURETY. " This is your comfort, believers, that my precepts " have been fully obeyed by *JESUS* your SAVIOUR. " As this was done, in your nature, and in your " stead, I am satisfied, and you are justified. Now, " though I can never dispense with any fault, nor " connive at any infirmity; yet I behold all your " faults laid upon IMMANUEL: I behold all his " righteousness put upon you; and on *his* account I " acquit you, I accept you, and pronounce you righteous *."

This is the language of the law to the faithful, as they are in *CHRIST JESUS*. This is the spirit of *Aspasio*'s conversation with his friend *Theron*. The native tendency of this doctrine, and its powerful agency in producing true holiness, are professedly displayed in the tenth letter; and not obscurely hinted in various other places. If you can prove, that it has a contrary tendency, you will prove, that *the grace of* GOD does no longer *teach us to deny*, but prompt us to

* I think, it is no misrepresentation, to suppose the law speaking, in this manner, to the believers.—Because to them *all things* are *become new*. Consequently, the voice of the law is new.—Because *all things are theirs*. If so, the sentence of the law is theirs. Not to overwhelm them with confusion, but to make them joyful through hope.—Because this is the language of the almighty LAWGIVER, to the redeemed of the *LORD JESUS;* and surely the law will not jar, but harmonize with its author, saying, *How shall I curse whom GOD hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the LORD hath not defied?*

to commit *ungodlineſs*. An attempt, in which, with all my eſteem for your perſon, and deference to your abilities, I cannot wiſh you *GOD ſpeed*.

" Does the righteouſneſs of GOD ever mean (as " you affirm) the merits of *CHRIST?*"—Where do I affirm this, Sir? Be pleaſed to produce the paſſage. At leaſt refer us to the page.—*Aſpaſio*, in the place which offends you, ſpeaks of what *CHRIST* has done and ſuffered; of his active and paſſive obedience. Theſe expreſſions you change into " the merits of " *CHRIST;*" which being an ambiguous phraſe, may ſerve to perplex the cauſe, rather than clear up the difficulty. Give me leave, therefore, to reſtore *Aſpaſio*'s words, and to ſtate the queſtion fairly.

" Does the righteouſneſs of GOD ever ſignify the " active and paſſive obedience of *CHRIST?*" To this Mr *Weſley* replies, " I believe not once in all the " ſcripture."—Why then, Sir, do you not diſprove what *Aſpaſio* has advanced in ſupport of this interpretation? *You* believe one thing; *he* believes another. And there is this *little* difference in the ground you reſpectively go upon. He appeals to argument and ſcripture. You reſt the whole matter upon this ſingle bottom, " I believe ſo."

You proceed—" It" (that is, the righteouſneſs of GOD) " often means, and particularly in the epiſtle " to the *Romans*, GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners." —Suppoſe I ſhould ſay, in my turn, This phraſe never means, no, not in the epiſtle to the *Romans*, GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners; I ſhould then argue in your own way; bring a ſhield ſuited to your ſword; juſt as good an argument to defend, as you have brought to deſtroy my opinion. What would the judicious reader ſay, on ſuch an occaſion? Would he not ſmile, and cry, " A goodly pair of diſputants " truly!"

But let me aſk, Does the holineſs of GOD ſignify his method of ſanctifying ſinners? Does the wiſdom

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of GOD signify his method of making sinners wise? This no mortal has suspected; this you yourself will hardly venture to assert. Why then should we take your word, when, without assigning the least reason, you dictate and declare, "The righteousness of GOD "means his method of justifying sinners?"—You must pardon us, Sir, if we prefer St *Peter*'s judgment; his judgment in that memorable passage, *Who have obtained like precious faith in the righteousness of our GOD, even of our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST.* This sentence is a key to all those texts in the New Testament, and many of those in the Old, which mention the righteousness of GOD. Here it necessarily signifies the righteousness of *CHRIST*; because none else is our GOD and SAVIOUR. Here it confessedly signifies the object of justifying faith. Which cannot be the essential righteousness of an absolute GOD, but must be the vicarious righteousness of an incarnate GOD. And why should you scruple to call the righteousness of *CHRIST*, the righteousness of GOD? since his blood is called the blood of GOD. His life, which he laid down for us, is called the life of GOD. And he himself, as the author of our salvation, is called *JEHOVAH* (or GOD self-existent and everlasting) *our righteousness*.

It is possible, you may produce some commentators of eminence, who co-incide or have led the way, in this your interpretation. But may we not ask them, as well as yourself, on what authority they proceed? —Is this the plain and natural signification of the words? No; but an apparent force upon their natural import.—Does this tend to fix and ascertain the sense of the passage? No; but it gives the passage such a rambling turn, as will accommodate itself to the sentiments of Arians or Socinians, Arminians or Papists.—Is this reconcileable with the tenor of scripture? *He hath made HIM to be sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of GOD*

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in him. Make a trial of your interpretation upon this distinguished text; see how it will accord with common sense, or the analogy of faith. That we might be made the righteousness of GOD; that is, "that "we might be made GOD's method of justifying "sinners." Can you yourself, Sir, upon an impartial review, be pleased with *such* interpretations of sacred writ?

How much more noble, and how much more comfortable is the easy and obvious sense, which the words, in a most beautiful climax, afford! He made *CHRIST*, who was perfectly free from sin, both in heart and life; GOD made him to be sin, justly chargeable with it, and justly punishable for it. That we, who are full of sin, both original and actual, might be made *righteous*—and not barely righteous, but (which is a much stronger expression) *righteousness itself;* yea, that we might be made, what exceeds all parallel, and passes all understanding, *the righteousness of GOD* *; might have that very righteousness for our justification, which the GOD of all perfection, uniting himself to our nature, wrought, finished, and infinitely ennobled.

Mr *Samuel Clarke*, in his annotations on this verse, on

* St *Chrysostom* expounds the important passage, in much the same manner. His words are worthy, not only to be copied in a note, but to be written on our hearts. Ποιος ταυτα λογος, ποιος ταυτα παρασησαι δυνησεται νυν; Τον γαρ δικαιον, φησιν, επoιησεν αμαρτωλον, ινα τους αμαρτωλους ποιηση δικαιους. Μαλλον δε ουδε ουτως ειπειν, αλλ' ο πολλα μειζον ην. Ου γαρ εξιν εθηκεν. αλλ' ουσιαν την ποιοτητα. Ου γαρ ειπεν, επoιησεν αμαρτωλον, αλλ' αμαρτιαν. Ινα ημεις γενωμεθα, ουκ ειπε, δικαιοι, αλλα δικαιοσυνη, και θειν δικαιοσυνην. *What words can express, or what thoughts can conceive, the greatness of these things? He made the RIGHTEOUS ONE a sinner, that he might make wretched sinners righteous. This, though marvellously great, is not all. The word is not in the concrete, but in the abstract. He made the JUST ONE, not a sinner, but sin; that we might be made, not righteous only, —but righteousness itself,—yea, the righteousness of GOD.*

on *Rom.* i. 17. on *Rom* x. 3. writes in the same vague and unsatisfactory manner as yourself. I could mention another celebrated commentator, who leans to this timid and trimming scheme.—I speak thus freely, because I look upon the article of justification through the righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR, to be the supreme distinguishing glory of Christianity. Because I consider it as the richest, incomparably the richest privilege of the Christian. To have a righteousness,—a consummate righteousness,—the very righteousness of the incarnate GOD,—dignified with all the perfections of the divine nature,—to have this righteousness imputed for our justification! matchless inconceivable blessing! This fills the believer's heart with inexpressible comfort and joy. This displays the grace of GOD, in the most charming and transporting light. This constitutes the most engaging motive to love, to holiness, and to all willing obedience.

Let us not then treat of it, in such *diluting* terms, or in such a *compromising* strain, as shall defeat the efficacy of the heavenly *cordial*, or deliver up the precious *depositum* to the enemies of the gospel. Let us rather, by a clear and full *manifestation of the truth*, of this capital and leading truth especially, *commend ourselves to every man's conscience*. Their humour may dislike it, their prejudice may reject it; but their conscience, whenever it awakes, and gains the ascendant, will embrace it; will cleave to it; and rejoice in it.

But stay. Let me proceed cautiously; not triumph immaturely. You rally your forces, and prepare for a fresh attack. *Aspasio* tells his friend, that the righteousness of GOD, signifies a righteousness of the most supereminent dignity; such as is worthy to be called by his name, and may justly challenge his acceptance. To this you reply, "I cannot allow it "at all."—*Aspasio* supports his opinion by scripture, by reason, and by a very respectable authority. All

which

which Mr *Wesley* would confront and overthrow, by that one irrefragable proof, "I cannot allow it at all."—Surely, said I, upon reading such controversial triflings, delivered with the air of oracular responses; surely this letter must have stoln its way into the world. It was designed as a preservative for Mr *Wesley's* private societies only. It could never be intended for public view, and general examination. Since every reader is treated, not as his judge, no, nor as his equal, but as his pupil; not as one, that is to be addressed with argument, and convinced by reasoning, but as a tame disciple, that is to acquiesce in the great preceptor's solemn "SAY SO."

To your next paragraph I have no material objection. I might indeed complain of an unfair quotation; but I shall only observe, that you would discard the expression, *imputation of righteousness*, and insert in its stead, *interest in CHRIST*. You had not always, Sir, such an aversion to the phrase imputed: witness that stanza in one of your hymns;

Let faith and love combine
To guard your valiant breast;
The plate be righteousness divine,
Imputed and impress.

However, in this place I am willing to gratify you: because it will be difficult to show, how a sinner can have a real interest in *CHRIST*, in what he has done and what he has suffered, any other way than by imputation. I am willing to gratify you, provided you do not entertain that strange conceit, of an *incomplete* interest, or an interest in half the REDEEMER; but look upon the holiness of his nature, the obedience of his life, and the atonement of his death, as the one undivided ineffable treasure, in which every believing sinner is interested; as that which is the all-sufficient cause of his justification; rendering acceptable, first his person, then his performances;

ances; and, at the laſt, introducing him, with dignity and triumph, into everlaſting habitations.

Here I lay down my pen; unleſs you will permit me to relate a little piece of hiſtory, not foreign to your laſt ſentiment.—A certain general happened to obſerve a common ſoldier diſtinguiſhing himſelf, on the day of battle, with uncommon activity and courage; determined to reward merit where-ever it was found, he advanced the brave plebeian to a captain's poſt; who had not long enjoyed the honour, before he came to his benefactor, and, with a dejected countenance, begged leave to reſign his commiſſion. The general, ſurpriſed at ſuch an unexpected requeſt, aſked him the reaſon. Your officers, ſaid the petitioner, being gentlemen of family and education, think it beneath them to aſſociate or converſe with a ruſtic. So that, now, I am abandoned on every ſide; and am leſs happy, ſince my preferment, than I was before this inſtance of your Highneſs's favour.—Is this the cauſe of your uneaſineſs? replied the general; then it ſhall be redreſſed, and very ſpeedily: to-morrow I review the army, and to-morrow your buſineſs ſhall be done.—Accordingly, when the troops were drawn up, and expected every moment to begin their exerciſe; the general calls the young hero from the ranks; leans his hand upon his ſhoulder; and, in this familiar endearing poſture, walks with him through all the lines.—The ſtratagem had its deſired effect. After ſuch a ſignal and public token of his prince's regard, the officers were deſirous of his acquaintance; and courted, rather than ſhunned, his company.

And will not the favour of the bleſſed *JESUS*, give us as great a diſtinction, and as high a recommendation, in the heavenly world? Will not the angelic hoſts reſpect and honour thoſe perſons, who appear waſhed in his blood; clothed with his righteouſneſs; and wearing the moſt illuſtrious tokens of his love, that he himſelf could poſſibly give?—In theſe tokens

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of his love may we and our readers be found! Then ſhall we meet one another with courage and comfort, at the great tribunal; with honour and joy, amidſt the angels of light; with everlaſting exultation and rapture, around the throne of the LAMB.

Under ſuch pleaſing hopes I take my leave at preſent, and remain your, *&c.*

LETTER VIII.

REV. SIR,

YOU introduce the paragraph that comes next under our conſideration, by a very juſt diſtinction. *Aſpaſio* had obſerved, that a rebel may be forgiven, without being reſtored to the dignity of a ſon. To which you reply; "A rebel againſt an earthly king "may; but not a rebel againſt GOD: in the very "ſame moment that GOD forgives, we are the ſons "of GOD."—This is perfectly right. But hence to infer, that the converſation of our two friends is no better than "an idle diſpute," is not very polite, and not at all concluſive. Becauſe remiſſion of the offence, and reſtoration to favour, may come in the ſame moment, and yet be different bleſſings. That afflicted patient, mentioned in the goſpel, had at the ſame inſtant his ears opened, and the ſtring of his tongue looſed. Were theſe effects, therefore, one and the ſame kind of healing?—Beſides, why are forgiveneſs and ſonſhip united in the divine donation? Becauſe the ſufferings of a ſinner, and the obedience of a ſon, were united in the divine REDEEMER. So that we muſt ſtill have our eye, our believing and adoring eye, upon the meritorious righteouſneſs of our LORD.

"Pardon and acceptance, though," *&c.* Here I ſee nothing but the *crambe repetita*.—The words of "*Job*,"

"*Job*," &c. Here I see nothing but the usual argument, our master's *ipse dixit*. Therefore we will pass on to the next period.

Two texts of scripture are produced. You set aside *Aspasio*'s interpretation, to make way for one of your own. Which might have passed without suspicion, if it had appeared in your sermons, or been delivered from your pulpit; where a person may be content with the general sense, without entering upon a critical nicety. But, by rejecting *Aspasio*'s exposition, you seem to intend a peculiar degree of accuracy. Let us then examine the passages with such a view.—*Grace reigneth thro' righteousness unto eternal life;* "that "is, the free love of GOD brings us, thro' justifi- "cation and sanctification, to glory."

In this, I question, Sir, whether you are exactly orthodox. You lead the reader to suppose, that sanctification is as much the cause of glory as justification; that *CHRIST*'s work, and our graces, have just the same weight; act in the very same capacity; have, at least, a joint influence, in procuring eternal life.—You should rather have expressed yourself in some such manner; "The free grace of GOD brings us, "through the joyful privilege of justification, first to "sanctification, or the love of his blessed self; then to "glory, or the enjoyment of his blessed self."

Besides, you neglect the significancy of that beautiful and emphatical word, *reigneth*. On this much stress ought to be laid in reading the sentence; therefore it ought not to be totally overlooked in explaining the sentence. Grace is *discovered* in other instances; grace is *exercised* in other blessings: but by giving us eternal life; by giving it freely, even when we are undeserving guilty creatures; this ever-amiable attribute *reigneth*. It is manifested with every grand and charming recommendation. It appears, like the illustrious *Solomon*, when seated on his inimitably-splendid throne of ivory and gold; or like the magnificent

magnificent *Ahasuerus*, when he *shewed the riches of his glorious kingdom, and the honour of his excellent majesty*.

Another particular I cannot persuade myself to admire. You change the word *righteousness* into *justification;* instead of saying, "Brings us through righ-"teousness;" you say, "Brings us through justifica-"tion." By this language, you scarce distinguish yourself from any heretic. You may rank with the Arian, or with the Sectarist of any denomination. They will, every one, allow the necessity of justification, in order to final felicity; but not the necessity of a righteousness adequate to the demands of the law, as a foundation for this blessed hope.—You do just the same injury to *CHRIST* and his righteousness, which obtain this inconceivable recompense of reward; as you would receive from a messenger, who carries a rich present to your friend, but will not acknowledge from whom it comes. It comes, he confesses, from some man; but obstinately refuses to say from Mr *John Wesley*. Whereas, *Aspasio* scruples not to own, nay, rejoices to declare, from whence the invaluable benefit of justification proceeds: Not from works of the law; no, nor from works of the SPIRIT; from nothing done by us, from nothing wrought in us; but wholly from the blood and obedience of *JESUS CHRIST*.

The next passage, on which you descant, is, *That they may receive forgiveness, and a lot among the sanctified*. Thus you translate the original. *Aspasio*, not affecting needless novelty, is content with the common version. *That they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among all them that are sanctified, by faith that is in ME*.—Why do you omit the word *sins*? Forgiveness, I own, implies it. But the apostle chuses to express it. By which means, the sentence becomes more full and emphatical. Grace is more highly honoured, and man more deeply abased.—I wonder also, why you should prefer *lot* to inheritance, which is

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the usual translation. The latter word conveys a much more noble and pleasing idea to the *English* reader, than the former.—*Receive forgiveness of sins;* not earn it (let us mark this) by performing conditions, but receive it, as an absolute gift. Just as *Joseph*'s brethren received the portions sent them from the viceroy of *Egypt*'s table.—*Receive an inheritance;* consisting of all spiritual blessings here, and a title to everlasting blessedness hereafter. All which are bestowed as freely, as the several portions of land in *Canaan* were, by *Moses* and *Joshua*, consigned over to the tribes of *Israel* for a possession.—*Among those that are sanctified.* If you should inquire, how sinners are sanctified? The answer is added; *by faith which is in ME.* Not *for* faith, as your conditional scheme supposes; but *by* faith: by accepting the blessings mentioned; by looking upon them as our own; through the divine gift; and by living in the delightful enjoyment of them. Thus our hearts are won to GOD, and filled with his love. Thus they are weaned from vanity, and renewed in true holiness.

Is the satisfaction made by *CHRIST*'s death, sufficient to obtain both our full pardon, and our final happiness? *Aspasio* has answered this question in the negative. He has confirmed his opinion, by the authority of scripture, and the testimony of reason. Mr *Wesley* thinks it enough to reply; "Unquestionably it "is sufficient, and neither of the texts you cite prove "the contrary."—How easy, by this way of arguing, to overthrow any system, and silence demonstration itself!—But pray, Sir, be pleased to recollect yourself. Did you not, a little while ago, extol *Aspasio* as "un-"questionably right," because he made the *universal* obedience of *CHRIST*, from his birth to his death, the one foundation of his hope? Yet here you condemn him, as "unquestionably wrong," because he does not attribute all to *CHRIST*'s death *exclusively*. Will Mr *Wesley* never have done with self-contradiction?

tion? why will he give me such repeated cause to complain,—*Quo teneam vultus, &c.*

If it was requisite for Christ to be baptized, argues *Aspasio*, much more to fulfil the moral law.—"I can-"not prove," replies Mr *Wesley*, "that either the one "or the other was requisite, in order to his purcha-"sing redemption for us." Why then do you admit his obedience to the moral law, as an essential part of the foundation of your hope? A tottering foundation methinks, which is laid in a doctrine you cannot prove.

But if you cannot prove it, may not others prove it for you? You are not called to prove this point, Sir, but only to disprove what *Aspasio* has advanced in confirmation of it.—That it was requisite for our LORD to be baptized, he himself acknowledges. Speaking of that sacred rite, he says, *Thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness.* It *becometh;* was it not requisite for *CHRIST*, always to act the becoming part? in every circumstance to demean himself, according to the utmost decorum and highest dignity of character?—"This was not requisite to purchase re-"demption for us." For what then was it requisite? Not to wash away any stain from the holy *JESUS.* Not to obtain any blessedness for the SON of the HIGHEST. Since, as the SON of the eternal GOD, he had an undoubted right to all the blessings of heaven and earth, of time and eternity.

"But it was not requisite, that he should fulfil the "moral law."—No! Do *you* then establish the law? Are not you the *Antinomian*, who would have sinful men saved, yet the divine law not fulfilled, either by them or their SURETY? This is a strange way of magnifying the great standard of all righteousness. Rather, it is the sure way of dishonouring and debasing it.—What says our LORD? *I came, not to destroy the law, but to fulfil* *. Did this signify, as some expository

* *Matth.* v. 17. Some expositors would persuade us, that

expoſitory refiners ſuggeſt, only to vindicate and illuſtrate the law; to explain its higheſt meaning, and reſcue it from the falſe gloſſes of the ſcribes; the buſineſs might have been done by the prophets and apoſtles. No occaſion for the KING of heaven to appear in perſon. His ambaſſadors might have tranſacted the whole affair of vindication and explanation. But to fulfil every jot and tittle preſcribed in its commands; to ſuffer all the vengeance and the whole curſe denounced in its penalty; this was a work worthy of the SON of GOD,—practicable by none, but the SON of GOD;—and, being executed by HIM, is truly meritorious of pardon and life for poor ſinners; of the reſtoration to the divine favour, and of their admiſſion into the heavenly kingdom.

The moral law is inviolable in its nature, and of eternal obligation. This is a truth of great importance: with this is connected, and on this depends, the abſolute neceſſity of vicarious righteouſneſs. I am no longer ſurpriſed, that you diſpute againſt the latter, ſince you queſtion or deny the former.—But conſider, what our LORD ſays farther upon this ſubject, in the fifth of St *Matthew*, and the eighteenth verſe. Perhaps, you will reply, "I have "both

the word πληρωσαι ſignifies *fully to explain.* This ſenſe I am far from diſcarding; but in this ſenſe I can by no means acquieſce. It neither gives us the whole, nor the principal part of our LORD's meaning. Let us place the matter in a different light; then I believe the ſcantineſs of the interpretation, and the impropriety of the notion, will appear unto all men.—We will ſuppoſe an ungodly perſon who has learned from books, the ſpiritual and extenſive import of the divine law. Having a ready utterance, he explains it clearly, properly, fully. Does any mortal ſay of this lip-practitioner, that he *fulfils the law?* No ſuch thing. A ſyſtem of precepts can never be fulfilled, without a due and punctual obedience. To open, to adjuſt, to enforce a ſet of injunctions, is as far from fulfilling them; as to give a deſcription of a battle and a conqueſt, are different from fighting the enemy, and gaining the victory.

"both considered it, and expounded it, in my ser-
"mons." You have; but in such a manner, as, I hope, you will live to retract. Thus you expound the awful text, and turn it into a piece of unmeaning tautology. "*One jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass,*
"*till heaven and earth pass;* or, as it is expressed im-
"mediately after, *till all* (or rather *all things*) *be ful-*
"*filled*, till the consummation of all things *." You would make εως αν παρελθη ο ουρανος και η γη, and εως αν παντα γενηται, synonymous phrases, expressive of the same thing. Thus stands the passage, interpreted according to your criticism. "Till the consummation of all things, one
"jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law,
"till the consummation of all things." See! to what miserable subterfuges a man of learning is driven, in order to evade the force of a text, which militates strongly for the meritorious obedience of *CHRIST*.

How much more just, more noble, more useful, is the common exposition, and the obvious meaning? Which we may thus introduce—These are the terms of life and happiness to man.—Whosoever falls short, GOD himself pronounces accursed. And will the UNCHANGEABLE go back from his purpose; make abatement in his demands; or come to a composition with his creatures? No verily. *He is of one mind, and who can turn him* †? *It were easier for heaven and earth to pass* ‡, for all nature to be unhinged, and the universe to drop into dissolution, *than for one*

* Sermons by JOHN WESLEY, vol. II. p. 173.

† Job xxiii. 13.

‡ Εως αν παρελθη ο ουρανος και η γη, a proverbial expression, to denote the utmost impossibility. See it explained *Luke* xvi. 17. In this connection, it signifies the absolute certainty of our LORD's declaration, both as to its truth and as to its accomplishment.—If I may borrow the language and the imagery of *Horace*, they will not unfitly express, what is affirmed concerning the law.

Si fractus illabatur orbis,
Immobilem ferient ruinæ.

*jot or tittle of this unalterable law to pass without a perfect accomplishment** in every the minutest instance.

By *CHRIST*'s sufferings alone the law was not satisfied, says *Aspasio*. "Yes, it was," replies Mr *Wesley*.—Then all the indefatigable and important labours of his life, all his exemplary and shining graces, must be mere superfluities. At least, they could have no merit, but were necessary only by way of setting an example.

The prophet was of another mind; *The LORD is well pleased for his righteousness sake.* By this righteousness, not barely by his sufferings, *he will magnify the law and make it honourable*†.—The apostle was of another mind. *GOD sent forth his SON, made of a woman, made under the law.* What? only to bear its curse? only to undergo its penalty? not to fulfil its preceptive part? which is confessedly the principal part in every law; and to enforce which, all penalties are added.—You yourself *ought* to be of another mind. For you have already and truly observed, that pardon and

* Εως αν παντα γενηται. "The word *all*," says Mr *Wesley*, "does "not mean all the law, but all things in the universe." How forced a construction! How contrary to grammar? Since the law, and the things which it comprehends, are the immediate antecedent.—How much more properly and consistently has Dr *Doddridge* explained the passage! "*Till all things*, which "the law requires, or foretells shall be *effected*. The transla"tion here given, is most literal, and most comprehensive. "The law *has its effect*, when its sanctions are executed, as "well as when its precepts are obeyed."—Let me add; in case of a violated law, *then only* it is fulfilled, or has its effect, when both the former and the latter respectively obtain their end.

† *Is.* xlii. 21. I am sensible, there are expositors, who give a different turn to these noble words. But I had rather take the voice from heaven for my guide, than all the expositors in the world; even that voice, which declared concerning *CHRIST*, and his work, *CHRIST* and his righteousness, In these *I am well pleased.* Which is one of the most capital sayings in the Bible, and a clue to lead us into its whole meaning.

and acceptance always go together. "In the same "moment that GOD forgives, we are the sons of "GOD." And wherefore? The reason is, because the sufferings of a sinner, and the obedience of a Son, went together in the REDEEMER. And without this union, the redemption of man had not been complete.

"The law required only the alternative, Obey or "die."—Some of your errors are less considerable; this I take to be a first-rate mistake. According to this supposition, *Cain* and *Judas*, and all the damned, are righteous. Because they *die;* they bear the curse; they suffer everlastingly; and thereby conform to one of the law's alternatives.—One of the *law's* alternatives? No, here I am wrong. It is one of *your* alternatives. The divine law knows no such thing: no law on earth knows any such thing. Sanctions and penalties annexed to a law, are never looked upon as equivalent to obedience, but only as preservatives from disobedience. —In all the compass of your reading, have you ever met with a law, that makes such proposals to its subjects? "Conform to the regulations established, and "you shall enjoy my privileges, you shall share my "honours. Or, if you chuse to violate all my whole-"some institutions, only submit to the penalty, and "you shall have an equal right to the immunities and "preferments."

"The law required no man to obey and die too." —But did it not require a transgressor to obey and die? If not, then transgression robs the law of its right, and vacates all obligation to obedience.—Did it not require the SURETY for sinful man, to obey and die? If the SURETY dies only, he only delivers from punishment; but this affords no claim to life, no title to a reward, unless you can produce some such edict from the court of heaven, Suffer this, and thou shalt live. I find it written, *In keeping thy commandment there is great reward.* No where do I read,

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In undergoing thy curſe, there is the ſame reward.—Whereas, when we join the active and paſſive obedience of our LORD, the peace-ſpeaking blood, with the life-giving righteouſneſs, both made infinitely meritorious, and infinitely efficacious, by the divine glory of his perſon; how full does our juſtification appear! How firm does it ſtand! It has all that the law can demand, both for our exemption from the curſe, and for our title to bliſs.

Before I take my leave of this topic, let me make one ſuppoſition, for which your way of thinking affords the juſter ground. Suppoſe our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* had yielded a perfect conformity to the precept, without ever ſubmitting to the penalty; would this have been ſufficient for the juſtification of a ſinner? Here is one of your alternatives performed. Upon the foot of your principles, therefore it would, it muſt have been ſufficient.—But this is ſo wild an opinion, ſo contrary to the whole current of ſcripture, that to produce it, is to refute it.

Where ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalvation to the death of *CHRIST*, a part of his humiliation is put for the whole. To this Mr *Weſley* objects; "I cannot allow it without proof."—I wiſh you would remember the golden rule, (of doing as you would be done by,) and, ſince you inſiſt upon proof from others, not be ſo ſparing of it in your own cauſe: I wiſh likewiſe you would impartially conſider what *Aſpaſio* has advanced, upon the ſubject.—Has he not given you the proof you demand?—"No; he was obe-"dient unto death, is no proof at all."—But is that the only thing urged? If one argument is inadequate, muſt all be inconcluſive? Becauſe you have routed one detachment, have you therefore conquered the whole army? However let us ſee, whether this detachment, weak as you ſuppoſe it, may not be able to ſuſtain your attack.

Does not the ſcripture aſcribe the whole of your ſalvation to the death of *CHRIST?* To this queſtion

Aſpaſio

Aſpaſio replies, This part of our LORD's meritorious humiliation is by a very uſual figure put for the whole.—The death of *CHRIST* includes not only his ſufferings, but his obedience.—The ſhedding of his blood was at once the grand inſtance of his ſufferings, and the finiſhing act of his obedience; in this view it is conſidered, and thus it is repreſented by his own ambaſſador, who, ſpeaking of his divine Maſter, ſays, "He was obedient unto death, even the death of the "croſs."—"This," you reply, "is no proof at all, "as it does not neceſſarily imply any more, than that "he died in obedience to the FATHER."

How do ſome people love to cramp the enlarged, and debaſe the magnificent ſenſe of ſcripture! Surely this text implies; and not implies only, but forcibly expreſſes both the active and paſſive obedience of *CHRIST*. It is not αποθανεν, *he died;* but γενομενος υπηκοος, *he became obedient*.—Can you ſee nothing of his active righteouſneſs in theſe words? For my part, I can ſee very little beſides.—This is what the following clauſe confirms—Let common ſenſe be judge—Obedient, not barely *in* death, but *unto* death, like that expreſſion of JEHOVAH, by the prophet, *Unto hoary hairs I will carry you*.—Does not this give us a retroſpect view of youth and manhood, as well as lead our attention forward to old age? In like manner, *obedient unto death;* does not this refer us to all the previous duties and virtues of a righteous walk; while it leads us to the cloſing ſcene of all, a reſigned exit? Does it not moſt naturally mean, obedient through the whole courſe of life, even to the laſt all-completing inſtance, a voluntary ſubmiſſion to death?—How eaſy and obvious is this interpretation! how grand and graceful is this meaning!

I can no more admire your taſte (conſidered) as a critic, than I can admire your doctrine (conſidered) as a divine. Give me the expoſitions of ſcripture, which act, not like the nocturnal damp, but like the morning

ing ſun; not ſhrivelling and contracting, but opening and expanding thoſe flowers of paradiſe, the truths of the goſpel, that they may diſplay all their charming beauties, and breathe out all their reviving odours. I think, upon the whole, we have very ſufficient cauſe to aſſert, and to abide by our aſſertion; that when the ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalvation to the death of *CHRIST*, a part of his humiliation is put for the whole; and in thus ſpeaking, the HOLY SPIRIT copies after himſelf. For if the death inflicted on the firſt *Adam* included every evil conſequent upon the fall; the depravity, as well as the miſery of the creature; it was meet that the death to which the ſecond *Adam* ſubmitted, ſhould include every good needful for our recovery; the obedience as well as the ſufferings of the REDEEMER. It was meet that the price expreſſed by the ſame word, ſhould be as extenſive as the puniſhment.

"But how does it appear that he undertook this "before the foundation of the world?" At what time does Mr *Weſley* ſuppoſe, that *CHRIST* undertook the work? Not till ſin entered and man apoſtatized? Was it then an incidental (upſtart) expedient, fetched in to remedy ſome unforeſeen diſaſter? Was it a device, which owed its birth to ſome unexpected contingency, occaſioned by the perverſeneſs of the creature? Far, far from it.—It was the grand, original, all-comprehending plan, the way in which GOD, long before time commenced, decreed to manifeſt the glory of his grace, and the luſtre of all his perfections. The world was made as a proper theatre, on which to diſplay and execute this moſt magnificent ſcheme; and all the revolutions of human affairs, like ſo many under plots in the drama, are ſubſervient to the accompliſhment of this capital deſign.—"Known unto "GOD are all his works," determined by GOD are all his counſels, from the beginning of the world, more eſpecially this grandeſt of all the divine diſpenſations;

sations; this master-piece of his unsearchable wisdom.

"But was this by a positive covenant between "*CHRIST* and the FATHER?" *Aspasio* proceeds to illustrate and confirm the doctrine of an everlasting covenant between the almighty FATHER and his co-equal SON. He produces several texts of scripture, to each of which you object as insufficient for his purpose: each of your objections I shall answer, only by adding a short comment, explanatory of their spirit and force—"This proves no previous contract;" that is, I deny it, and therefore it cannot prove your point. "Neither does this prove any such thing." That is, I cannot or will not see the proof. And therefore there is none.—"That expression does not neces-"sarily imply any more" than I please to allow.—"In "the way or method he had chosen;" of which I am the sole complete judge, and my judgment ought to be decisive in the case.—Thus would Mr *Wesley* have, not *Aspasio* only, but the public also, receive his dictates (*tanquam a tripode*) as absolute oracles.—For here is only bare assertion, or bare denial, without any vouchers, but his own word; without any authority, but his own declaration.

In *psalm* the xlth, the conditions of the covenant are circumstantially recorded, which were the incarnation and obedience of the eternal SON. "A body "hast thou prepared me—lo! I come to do thy will." "Nay, here is no mention of any covenant, nor any "thing from which it can be inferred." *How many times shall I adjure thee*, said *Ahab* to *Micaiah*, *that thou tell me nothing but that which is true?* And how many times shall I intreat Mr *Wesley* to object nothing, without assigning some reason for his objection? at least not to think of convincing my judgment, and converting me to his opinion by a bare *say so*.—But I have done—Perhaps I have trespassed upon the patience of the reader, in expressing my disappointment so frequently; perhaps I may also bear too hard upon Mr

Weſley in aſking for proofs, when it may be no ſmall difficulty to produce them. To return—" Nay here " is no mention of any covenant, nor any thing from " which it can be inferred."—That the word *covenant* is not mentioned, is very true; that there is no reference to any ſuch thing, is not ſo certain: let us conſider the whole paſſage.—" Sacrifice and burnt-of- " fering thou didſt not require." If ſacrifice and ſlain beaſts are not the object of the divine complacency, in what will the LORD delight? The next words declare, " A body haſt thou prepared me:" Since the law cannot be fulfilled without *doing*, nor juſtice ſatisfied without *dying*, " lo! I come," ſays the ſecond perſon in the TRINITY, " to undertake both: ſince " this undertaking muſt be accompliſhed by ONE " who is finite, that he may die; and infinite, that " he may conquer death; I will accompliſh it in the " divine and human nature. For this purpoſe a body " haſt thou prepared me; in this body lo! I come, " willingly and chearfully I come, to perform, to ſu- " ſtain, to fulfil all; and ſo to do thy great, thy gra- " cious will."—May we not rationally ſuppoſe this ſpoken by way of (reſtipulation, or) compliance with the FATHER's demands? that the matter is thereby brought to a ſolemn contract?

Dr *Hammond* thought this no irrational ſuppoſition; therefore gives us, upon the following words, a perfectly-correſponding comment. In the volume of the book it is written of me. " Which is no other than " a bill, or roll of contract between the FATHER " and *CHRIST*; wherein is ſuppoſed to be written " the agreement, preparatory to that great work of " *CHRIST*'s incarnation, wherein he, undertaking " to fulfil the will of GOD, to perform all active, " and alſo all paſſive obedience, even unto death, had " the promiſe from GOD, that he ſhould become the " author of eternal ſalvation to all that obey him." Thus ſays our learned countryman. And what ſays

the

the bleſſed apoſtle? whoſe expoſition and application of the paſſage you ſeem to have forgotten, at leaſt, not to have thoroughly weighed. Having quoted the paſſage, argued from it, and diſplayed the benefits obtained by this all-ſufficient propitiation, he adduces a text from *Jeremiah* relating to this very ſubject, and explaining its nature: whereof the HOLY GHOST alſo is a witneſs; of what? of the juſtification and ſanctification of ſinners, both founded on, both effected by, the ſacrifice of the dying *JESUS*. Tranſactions, which both the prophet and the apoſtle conſider under the notion of a covenant, as is plain from the following quotation: "For after that he had ſaid "before, This is the covenant which I will make "with them in thoſe days." Hence it appears, that the author to the *Hebrews* ſaw ſomething in the words of the Pſalmiſt, from which the doctrine of a covenant might be inferred.

Another copy of this grand treaty is recorded, *Iſ.* xlix. from the firſt to the ſixth verſe. "I have read "them, but cannot find a word about it in all thoſe "verſes; they contain neither more nor leſs than a "prediction of the ſalvation of the Gentiles." They contain a prediction, and ſomewhat more; they deſcribe the way whereby this moſt deſirable event ſhall be brought to paſs. This the LORD himſelf declares ſhall be by way of covenant; "I will give thee for a "covenant to the people."—This verſe we may look upon as a key to the preceding. It teaches us to conſider them as deſcriptive of the auguſt covenant; of its eſtabliſhment, its parties, and its terms. Indeed the verſes themſelves lead us to the ſame view; for what is a covenant? A contract, wherein a condition is preſcribed, a promiſe is made, and both are ratified by a mutual agreement.—The condition is preſcribed in thoſe words, *Thou art my ſervant, O Iſrael*, in whom*

* *Iſrael* is the name of the church, often given to her in

whom I will be glorified. The promiſe is made in thoſe words, *Thou ſhalt raiſe up the tribes of Jacob, reſtore the preſerved of Iſrael, and be my ſalvation unto the ends of the earth.* The agreement is ſpecified or implied in thoſe words: (*I have ſpent my ſtrength for nought, yet*) *ſurely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my GOD.*

The great *Vitringa*, after having expounded the whole clauſe, concludes in this manner: "Antequam "ab his verbis, ſenſu fœcundiſſimus, ſummam do- "ctrinæ evangelicæ complexis, diſcedam, monere ve- "lim, eadem clariſſime deformare totum myſterium "conventionis pacis, inter Deum patrem et Meſſiam "filium ejus, in humana carne appariturum, initæ, "perinde ac in locis quæ ex aliis excerpo, *Pſal.* xl. 7. "*Zech.* vi. 13. Pater ut Dominus, filio ut Meſſiæ, "offert gloriam longe ampliſſimam, mediationis et "ſalvationis Judæorum et Gentium, quæ gloria, om- "nium quæ mente concipi poſſunt, eſt maxima, ſub "lege ſive ſub conditione profundiſſimi obſequii ſer- "vilis; eaque ſtipulatio utrinque ratihabetur *."

If, upon a ſtricter review, this prophecy be found to expreſs no ſuch thing as a covenant, I am very willing

this prophecy. *CHRIST* and his church, by virtue of the union between them, have the ſame names. As ſhe is ſometimes called by his name, "The LORD our righteouſneſs;" —ſo he is here called by her name *Iſrael*. See *Jer.* xxxiii. 16.

"* Vitring. in loc. Before I leave this paragraph, which is "ſo rich in ſenſe, and contains the very ſubſtance of evangeli- "cal doctrine, I would obſerve, that it moſt clearly and ex- "actly delineates the myſterious council of peace, planned be- "tween GOD the FATHER, and his divine SON. The FA- "THER as ſupreme LORD, offers to his SON the MES- "SIAH the higheſt glory, that which ſhall reſult from juſtify- "ing, ſanctifying, and ſaving, with an everlaſting ſalvation, "both Jews and Gentiles. This glory, the greateſt which "thought can conceive, is propoſed on the terms, or under "the condition of his deep humiliation, even to the ſtate and "obedience of a ſervant. The whole paſſes into a ſolemn "contract, and is ratified on either ſide."

Here

willing to give up the proof; ſo much the rather as it makes no part of *Aſpaſio*'s diſcourſe, is only juſt mentioned in a note, and ſtands not in the main body, but only as a corps de reſerve.

By the covenant of works, man was bound to obey in his own perſon.—Here you take *Aſpaſio* up very ſhort, and reply, "So he is under the covenant of "grace, tho' not in order to juſtification." This is the very thing he means. Nor could you eaſily have miſtaken his meaning, if you had only done him ſo ſmall a piece of juſtice as to read the whole paragraph; of which, ſince you ſeem either willingly, or through inadvertence, to be ignorant, I will beg leave to tranſcribe it:—"Between the covenant of works, and "the covenant of grace, this I apprehend is the diffe-"rence. By the former man was indiſpenſably bound "to obey in his own perſon; by the latter, the obe-"dience

Here our author ſubjoins an extract from בראשית רבה a rabbinical treatiſe. Which is very remarkable; for ſuch a writer, ſingularly juſt; one of the moſt curious, as well as valuable pieces of *Jewiſh* antiquities that ever fell in my way. I believe it will afford no unpleaſing entertainment, perhaps ſome ſpiritual benefit to the reader. For which cauſe I take leave to tranſcribe it.—"GOD began to enter into a covenant with the "MESSIAH, and ſaid, MESSIAH, my righteous one, the "ſins of thy choſen people are likely to bring thee into a ſtate "of great toil and extreme affliction; thy lips ſhall taſte gall, "thy tongue ſhall cleave to the roof of thy mouth, thy body "ſhall be waſted with ſorrow and ſighing. Is thy love to thy "people inviolable? Art thou willing to reſcue them on theſe "conditions? If thou undertakeſt their recovery, well; if "not, they are rejected from this moment, and periſh for e-"ver.—To this MESSIAH replied, LORD of eternity, I am "pleaſed with the office, I accept theſe conditions; and am "willing to undergo all tribulation, that my people may en-"joy a reſurrection (to the life of grace and the life of glo-"ry.)—Then ſaid the holy, bleſſed GOD, Be it ſo. Imme-"diately the MESSIAH took upon him our miſeries, as it is "written in the book of the prophet *Iſaiah*, He was op-"preſſed and he was afflicted."

"dience of his SURETY is accepted, inſtead of "his own.—The righteouſneſs required by both, is "not ſincere, but complete; not proportioned to the "abilities of fallen man, but to the purity of the law, "and the majeſty of the LAWGIVER." You ſee the whole argument turns upon a *complete* righteouſneſs, ſuch as ſatisfies the law, and is an adequate ground for juſtification. This, I imagine, fallen man is not obliged, by the covenant of grace, to perform; if ſo, we ſhall be at a loſs to find any ſuch thing as grace; if ſo, we can have no hope of obtaining ſalvation with eternal glory. There will be too much reaſon for applying, to all mankind, thoſe awful words of the prophet; *In the day thou mayſt make thy plant to grow, and in the morning thou mayſt make thy ſeed to flouriſh; but the harveſt ſhall be a heap, in the day of grief and deſperate ſorrow.*

Bleſſed be GOD the melancholy ſtrain is ſuperſeded.—Though the terms in the firſt covenant were a perfect obedience; though the terms once fixed continue unalterable; yet, in the new covenant, there is a change and ſubſtitution as to the performer, without any relaxation as to the performance. Inſtead of perſonal obedience, we are juſtified through the obedience of our MEDIATOR, *We are* made *the righteouſneſs of GOD in him.* That is, we are furniſhed with a plea, as prevalent for our juſtification and admiſſion into the divine favour, as if we had retained our innocence untainted; and, in every reſpect, conformed ourſelves to the righteouſneſs which the law of GOD requires *.—Thus the ſalvation of ſinners neither

* 2 *Cor.* v. 21. This is Dr *Doddridge*'s interpretation of the paſſage; and it ſpeaks a noble, a joyful truth, only it does not expreſs the whole truth. The righteouſneſs of GOD is more than equivalent to untainted innocency; is more than tantamount to the moſt perfect human obedience. It is a righteouſneſs of infinite worth, far ſurpaſſing the integrity of *Adam* in paradiſe, or the ſanctity of angels in heaven. It is a gift, incomparably, yea, incomprehenſibly great, efficacious, glorious.

neither clashes with the truth, nor interferes with the justice of the supreme LEGISLATOR —On the contrary, it becomes a *faithful* and *just* procedure of the most high GOD, to justify *him that believeth on JESUS*.

The obedience of our Surety is accepted instead of our own. "This is neither a safe, nor a scriptural way "of speaking."—That the obedience of *CHRIST* is accepted for our justification, is a doctrine warranted by scripture; it may therefore very justly be reckoned a scriptural way of speaking. And if *his* obedience is accepted for this purpose, *our own*, was it ever so considerable, could come in for no share of the work. Our own, though ever so gorgeously arrayed, must stand aside, or be cast into shades, just as the stars hide their diminished, or rather extinguished heads, when the sun appears in his meridian splendour, because the obedience of *CHRIST* is of infinite dignity and value. And infinite value is such, as not only transcends all other services, but renders them mere nothings in the comparison. For this reason, the apostle counted all endowments, but *loss* for *CHRIST*, and the prophet represents all nations as nothing before GOD.

"I would simply say, We are accepted through the "Beloved."—If you rightly understood what is meant, when the apostle speaks of being accepted in the *BELOVED*, you would have no fault to find with *Aspasio*'s comment. St *Paul* means we are accepted, not by any obedience performed in our own persons, but solely by the obedience of that infinitely-excellent, and infinitely beloved *ONE CHRIST JESUS*, whose righteousness being imputed to us, and put upon us, causes us not only to be pardoned, but to be highly esteemed, dearly beloved, and blessed with all spiritual blessings.

Here I cannot but observe, that you have changed the

the apoſtle's expreſſion. He ſays, "Accepted * *in* "the Beloved;" you ſay, "Accepted *through* the Be-"loved." I am willing to believe this was an overſight, you had no ſiniſter deſign; but ſtill I think you ſhould take more heed to your pen, and not alter the inſpired word, leſt you blemiſh the language, or injure the ſenſe. Perhaps you will aſk, What difference is there between accepted *through*, and accepted *in*, the beloved? I will illuſtrate the difference by a ſimilitude. A creditable houſekeeper gives a good character to a ſervant that leaves him, by virtue of which he is accepted, and admitted to ſome other valuable employ. This character is his introduction, yet this makes no addition to his real value. Acceptance through the Beloved, may import no more, than ſuch an admiſſion through ſuch a recommendation. Whereas, accepted *in* the Beloved, implies not only a recommendatory paſſport from *CHRIST*, but a real union with *CHRIST*, whereby we are incorporated into his ſacred body, and partake as truly of his righteouſneſs, as the members partake of the life which animates the head. By this our perſons are really ennobled; this imparts the higheſt dignity to our nature. We are not only recommended to, but rendered meet for, the favour, the complacency, the beatific preſence of GOD, being one with *JESUS*, and therefore loved even as *JESUS* himſelf is loved †.

The ſecond covenant was not made with *Adam* or any of his poſterity, but with *CHRIST* in thoſe words. "For any authority you have from theſe "words, you might as well have ſaid, it was made "with the HOLY GHOST."—No;" *CHRIST*, not the HOLY GHOST, was the ſeed of the woman.—This is an anſwer much in your own ſtrain.—But let us conſider farther.

You

* Εχαριτωσεν ημας εν τω Ηγαπημενω.

† *John* xvii. 23. They *in* me, ſays our LORD. Therefore, on this account, or viewed in this relation, *thou haſt loved them, as thou haſt loved me.*

You allow, I presume, that the first covenant was made with *Adam*, as our public fœderal head :—That all his posterity were included in it, being to stand or fall together with him : Herein, says the apostle, "*Adam* was a figure of him that was to come." If so, the second covenant must be made with *CHRIST*, as our public fœderal head. He and all his seed are included in it ; and as it was impossible for him to miscarry, they must be joint-partakers of the benefits. Accordingly, he is styled the MEDIATOR of the new covenant, by whose most acceptable and prevailing interposition, all its blessings are obtained : he is styled the Surety of the covenant, engaging to pay the whole debt for poor insolvent creatures ; the debt of penal suffering, and the debt of perfect obedience.—The Testator of the covenant, whose are its riches, and whose are its privileges, who has also of his unbounded goodness bequeathed them as so many inestimable legacies to indigent men. Methinks those are such charming truths, such divinely-comfortable doctrines, that you should consider them thoroughly before you oppose them, least you do a greater act of unkindness to your readers, than that which is charged, though very injuriously, upon *Job : Thou has stripped the naked of their cloathing, and sent widows away empty.* And when you are disposed to consider these points thoroughly, ask yourself this question : Is it possible to conceive that *CHRIST* should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the covenant, if it was not made with him, and the execution of it undertaken by him ?—Or, is it possible to suppose, that the all-glorious SON of GOD should be the MEDIATOR, the Surety, the Testator of the covenant, yet leave others to perform the conditions ; which are incomparably the most important, interesting, and difficult parts of the transaction ?

"These words were not spoken to *CHRIST*, but "of him." True, *of* him as given for a covenant of

the people. "There is not the leaſt intimation of any "ſuch covenant." You will not deny that *CHRIST* is ſignified by *the ſeed of the woman*.—It is ſaid, *He ſhall;* a language expreſſing authority, and requiring conformity. As *CHRIST* is the ſupreme uncontrollable GOD, this could not be required; and would never have been ſaid, without his actual conſent: here then is implied his approbation of the office. It is farther ſaid, The ſerpent ſhall bruiſe his heel.—He ſhall become incarnate, and after a life of much ſorrow, and many tribulations, ſhall be put to a moſt tormenting death. Here is the condition of the covenant. It is added, He ſhall bruiſe the ſerpent's head; ſhall deſtroy the works of the devil, and repair the ruins of the fall; ſhall deliver from the wrath deſerved, and recover the inheritance forfeited.—Here is the recompence or reward of the covenant.

Should you aſk, Is it ſuppoſable that *Adam* underſtood the words in this compaſs of meaning? Perhaps not. But if we do not underſtand them in a more exalted and extenſive ſenſe than our firſt father, what advantage do we reap from the full revelation of the goſpel?—The full revelation of the goſpel pours as much light upon this, and other of the ancient oracles, as the experiments of our modern anatomiſts have poured upon the ſtructure and œconomy of the human body.—This grand original text, read with the comment of the New Teſtament, ſpeaks all that *Aſpaſio* has ſuggeſted; all that our fallen ſtate could want, or our very hearts can wiſh.

You have muſtered up ſeveral objections, yet there is room for more; I will therefore for once act as your auxiliary, and turn againſt *Aſpaſio*. "He ſuppoſes "the covenant to be made with *CHRIST*. Where- "as the ſcripture repreſents the covenant as made "with various men, particularly and perſonally, in "various ages."—True, it is recorded, that GOD made a covenant with *Abraham*, with *Iſaac*, with *Jacob*,

cob, and with *David* the father of *Solomon:* but were they in a capacity to enter into covenant with their Maker; to ſtand for themſelves, or be ſurety for others? I think not.—The paſſages mean no more, than the LORD's manifeſting in an eſpecial manner, the grand covenant to them; ratifying and confirming their perſonal intereſt in it; and farther aſſuring them, that *CHRIST*, the great covenant-head, ſhould be of themſelves, and ſpring from their ſeed.

This accounts for that remarkable and ſingular mode of expreſſion, which often occurs in ſcripture; *I will make a covenant with them;* or, *This is my covenant with them.*—Yet there follows no mention of any conditions, only a promiſe of unconditional bleſſings; becauſe the former have already been performed, and nothing remains but to confer the latter; ſo that the meaning of the divine Speaker is, I will admit them to an intereſt in this covenant, and make them partakers of its privileges.

I ſhould now conclude, but Mr *Weſley* will not ſuffer me to quit the ſubject. He farther inſiſts, "The "words manifeſtly contain, if not a covenant made "with, a promiſe made to *Adam* and all his poſterity." —*If not*—He begins to heſitate in his aſſertion; to fluctuate in his opinion; and I could hope, to ſee his miſtake.—"The words contain a promiſe."—And have you never read, that the covenant of GOD, or the various renewals and ratifications of the covenant of grace, are ſtyled *covenants of promiſe?* which conſiſt of pure promiſes, and diſpenſe free gifts?

Obſerve the tenor of the new covenant, as it ſtands ingroſſed by the pen of inſpiration. *This is the covenant, which I will make with the houſe of Iſrael after thoſe days, ſaith the LORD; I will put my laws into their mind, and on their hearts will I write them: and I will be to them a GOD, and they ſhall be to me a people. And they ſhall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, ſaying, Know the*

LORD :—for all shall know me, from the least of them, even unto the greatest of them.—For I will be merciful unto their unrighteousnesses, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.—Where are your conditions in this draught? Where are any terms required of impotent man? Is it not all promise, from the beginning to the end? That repentance, and that faith, for whose conditionality you plead, are they not both comprehended in this heavenly deed; and comprehended under the form of blessings vouchsafed, not of tasks enjoined?—Does the contract run in this manner? I require and command; or in this strain? I grant and bestow. The LORD says, *I will put my laws; I will write them.*—The work shall not be laid on my creatures, but done by myself. *They shall be my people, and I will remember their sins no more.* What? provided they perform such and such duties. I read no such clause. I see no such proviso.—All is absolutely free; dependent on no performance of ours; but flowing from sovereign, supreme, self-influenced goodness.

Just such is that delightful declaration, *I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their heart, that they shall not depart from me.*—What you call conditions must be comprised in *my fear*. This is represented as a singular benefit, which GOD imparts; as a gracious temper, which GOD implants; and both as dependent, not on the fidelity of man, but on the power and veracity of GOD.—Another of your conditions, I presume, is perseverance unto the end.—This, in the covenant of grace, is not enjoined, but secured; secured, not by a strict prohibition of apostasy, but by the omnipotent interposition of JEHOVAH. *I will put my fear;* so put my fear into their hearts, *that they shall not depart from me;* shall never draw back unto perdition.—Thus the covenant becomes not transient, but everlasting. Thus the promise is not precarious, but sure to all the seed.

There

There ſeems to be as great a difference between this evangelical, and your legal method of ſtating the covenant; between ſuſpending the benefits on human endeavours, and grounding them on divine agency, as between hanging the anchor on the top of the maſt, and fixing it at the bottom of the ſea.

Let me add one more text, which now occurs to my thoughts, *Ye are the children of the prophets, and of the covenant which GOD made with our fathers, ſaying unto Abraham, And in thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth be bleſſed* *. Here the covenant is firſt mentioned in general; then particularly ſpecified.—*In thy ſeed ſhall all the kindreds of the earth*—be laid under conditions? be obliged to execute terms? No; but *ſhall be bleſſed;* bleſſed with all bleſſings, temporal, ſpiritual, eternal.—*In thy ſeed;*—that is, in *CHRIST*,—without any regard to qualifications or deeds of their own; entirely by virtue of an intereſt in his conſummately-excellent actions, and conſummately-precious ſufferings.—Then the apoſtle ſingles out one ſpecial and diſtinguiſhed bleſſing of the covenant; a converſion from *darkneſs to light, and from the power of Satan to the ſervice of GOD;* or, as it is expreſſed in the following verſe, *a turning from all iniquity*.—This is ſtill exhibited to our contemplation, as the fruit of the covenant of grace; as the thing for which it makes proviſion, not introductory to, but conſequent upon, our participation of it.

If therefore, in ſpeaking of holineſs and obedience, we repreſent them as the promiſes, rather than the demands of the covenant, we evidently follow the apoſtle's example. Were we to take the contrary courſe, we ſhould act as prudently as the ſportſman, who, entering his horſe for a plate, chuſes to have him walk backwards, rather than run forwards: Would this increaſe his ſpeed? Would this help him to outſtrip

* Acts iii. 25.

ſtrip his rivals? or enable him to win the prize?—Shall we, in order to avoid the charge of *Antinomianiſm*, ruſh into this abſurdity? I am perſuaded you could not wiſh to ſee ſo egregious a piece of folly, even in your enemy; much leſs in Your, *&c.*

LETTER IX.

REV. SIR,

I Wiſh you would conſider with ſome attention, that emphatical memento of the apoſtle, *Since ye knew the grace of GOD in truth.* Here he intimates, that we may have a knowledge of grace, which is not genuine; not free from corrupt mixture, not true.—It may be ſo diſcoloured with error, or blended with ſo much of the law, as no longer to appear like itſelf.—The language of ſuch perſons, is ſomewhat like the language of the *Iſraelites*, after their return from captivity, who ſpoke neither the *Hebrew*, nor the Heatheniſh dialect; but expreſſed themſelves half in the ſpeech of *Aſhdod*, and half in the ſpeech of *Zion*.

It is true, ſays *Aſpaſio*, I cannot perform the conditions.—"It is not true," ſays Mr *Weſley*. This is pretty blunt, and pretty bold too; for it is, in effect, affirming, that a man dead in treſpaſſes and ſins is able to perform conditions. Mr *Weſley* is not aware, that "*CHRIST* ſtrengthening us," is one of the benefits of the covenant, comprehended in theſe words, *I will put my laws into their minds*.

"The conditions of the new covenant are, Repent "and believe." It has been already ſhewn, that they are repreſented by the HOLY GHOST, not as conditions, but as bleſſings; not as conditions required, but as bleſſings beſtowed; not as conditions on which depends the accompliſhment of the covenant; but as happy fruits, or precious effects, of the covenant;

covenant; made, and making good to ſinners, who are wholly without ſtrength.

'Tis equally true, ſays *Aſpaſio*, this is not required at my hands. "'Tis equally true," ſays Mr *Weſley*, "that is abſolutely falſe."—This is, doubtleſs, a *home*-thruſt.—It behoves us to provide ſome ardour of proof for our defence; and this the ſcripture furniſhes abundantly. It furniſhes us with more than *robur et æs triplex*. The ſcripture ſets forth juſtification, ſalvation, and all bleſſedneſs, as things perfectly free; detached from all works; dependent on no conditions, but the gifts of ſovereign goodneſs, and infinitely-rich grace.

Though you, Sir, treat *Aſpaſio* in ſo unceremonious a manner, we will be more complaiſant; you ſhall receive ſuch entertainment from us as the king of *Babylon*'s ambaſſadors received from *Hezekiah*. We will, on this occaſion, ſhew you *the houſe of our precious things, the ſilver and the gold, the ſpices and the precious ointment, and* if not *all*, yet ſome of *the houſe of our armour* *.

We are ſaved, that is, we have all the benefits of the new covenant—By grace—*By grace ye are ſaved.—It is of grace, and no more of works.—Who hath ſaved us, not according to our works, but according to his purpoſe and grace* †.

Freely—*Being juſtified freely.—The things that are freely given to us of GOD.—Whoſoever will, let him take the water of life freely* ‡.

By way of gift—*If thou knoweſt the gift of GOD.—The gift of GOD is eternal life.—The free gift came upon all men, to juſtification of life* ‖.

Without the law—*The righteouſneſs of GOD without the law.—That we might be juſtified, not by the works of the law.—If the inheritance were of the law* §.

Not

* 2 Kings xx. 13. † Eph. ii. 5. Rom. x. 6. 2 Tim. i. 9. ‡ Rom. iii. 34. 1 Cor. 2. 12. Rev. xxii. 19. ‖ John iv. 10. Rom. vi. 23. v. 18. § Rom. iii. 21. Gal. 16. iii. 18.

Not by works—*Not of works, but of him that calleth us.—Not by works of righteouſneſs which we have done, but according to his mercy he ſaved us.—Not having mine own righteouſneſs, which is of the law* *.

By righteouſneſs, not performed, but imputed—*Faith* (in *CHRIST*, as our all) *is imputed for righteouſneſs.—GOD imputeth righteouſneſs without works.—To whom it* (that is, the merits of a dying and riſing SAVIOUR) *ſhall be imputed* †.

Not by guiltleſs behaviour, but by remiſſion of ſins—*Bleſſed are they whoſe iniquities are forgiven, and whoſe ſins are covered.—GOD was in CHRIST, reconciling the world unto himſelf, not imputing their treſpaſſes unto them.—To give knowledge of ſalvation by the remiſſion of their ſins* ‡.

Not each by himſelf, but all by one—*They ſhall reign in life, by one CHRIST JESUS.—By the obedience of one, ſhall many be made righteous.—By one offering, he hath perfected for ever thoſe that are ſanctified* ‖.

By faith alone—*Being juſtified by faith.—A man is juſtified by faith, without the deeds of the law.—Thro' him, all that believe are juſtified from all things* §. Not on account of faith, as a condition performed; but on account of CHRIST, the pearl of ineſtimable price; which faith receives, applies, and uſes.—*Who has* by himſelf *purged away our ſins, by himſelf finiſhed our tranſgreſſions, made reconciliation for our iniquities, and brought in an everlaſting righteouſneſs* ††.

This is the doctrine of ſcripture. Becauſe it is of the greateſt importance, you ſee, with what care it is ſtated, and with what copiouſneſs diſplayed, with what zeal it is urged, and with what vigilance guarded.—How ſolicitouſly the ſacred writers uſe every form of ſpeech that may exclude all human works; may ſet

* Rom. ix. 11. Tit. iii. 5. Phil. iii. 9. † Rom. iv. 5, 6, 23, 24, 25. ‡ Pſal. xxxii. 1. 2 Cor. v. 19. Luke i. 77. ‖ Rom. v. 17, 18, 19. Heb. x. 14. § Rom. v. 1. iii. 28. Acts xiii. 39. †† Heb. i. 3. Dan. ix. 24.

set aside all conditions and pre-requisites, in order to supersede all glorying, and ascribe the whole of our justification to the free grace of GOD, and the sole merits of *CHRIST*.

After all these testimonies of scripture, shall we still maintain that the covenant of grace consists of conditions; depends upon conditions; is such as we cannot expect to have made good till certain conditions are, by us, duly and truly fulfilled? *Dagon* may as well stand in the presence of the ark, as such a notion in the face of these evengelical texts.

All, all is free to us sinners, though it was not free to *CHRIST* our SAVIOUR.—He paid the price; he performed the conditions. If you would know what *price* was paid; what *conditions* were performed, and on what *terms* we inherit the blessing; you, Sir, may receive information from Mr *John Wesley*, who says in his comment, "All the blessings of the new "covenant are secured to us by the one offering of "*CHRIST*." According to this commentator, they are not only procured for us, but *secured* to us. How could either of these be true,—much more, how could the latter be fact,—if the blessings were suspended on any performance or any acquisition of ours? If I am not to enjoy them *until* I discharge this or that duty, they are not procured for me; if I am not to enjoy them *unless* I become possessed of this or that quality, they are not secured to me; not secured to me, as the estate is to an heir, even whilst he is a minor, but only as the prize is to a racer, in case, by exerting his speed and his strength, he arrives first at the goal; which was never yet called security, but allowed to be mere uncertainty.

As to this point, *others* may receive information from the prophet *Zechariah*: *By the blood of thy covenant, I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit, wherein was no water* *. *Thy prisoners*, those wretched

* Zech. ix. 11.

ed creatures, who were in a ſtate of guilt, and under the ſentence of death; ſubject to the tyranny of the devil, and liable to the damnation of hell. In this diſmal ſtate they were, as in a *pit* unfathomably deep; from which there ſeemed no poſſibility of eſcape, nor any method of deliverance: A pit, in which there is *no water*, nothing but abſolute miſery, without a gleam of hope, or a drop of comfort. *I have ſent them forth* into a place of liberty; where they obtain pardon, and enjoy peace, are ſatisfied with the plenteouſneſs of my houſe, and drink of my pleaſures as out of a river. All this, by the *blood of thy covenant*.—Blood was the righteous term, blood was the dreadful requirement, even that infinitely precious blood of *CHRIST*, on which the covenant of our freedom was eſtabliſhed, and by which its rich bleſſings are procured. Which is called *thy covenant* *, *O daughter of Zion*, thou church of the firſt-born, becauſe it was made in thy name; made with thy divine Surety, and for thy unſpeakable good.

This is not only falſe, but "moſt dangerouſly falſe. "—If we allow this, Antinomianiſm comes in with a "full tide." Pray, Sir, what do you mean by *Antinomianiſm?* ſuch a contrariety to the law, as debaſes its dignity; deprives it of its proper honour and proper end †?

Surely then, not *Aſpaſio*'s, but Mr *Weſley*'s tenets, are chargeable with this kind of heterodoxy; ſince they would cauſe the law to be put off with a mite, when millions of talents are its due;—oblige it to be content

* *Thy covenant.* The words are not addreſſed to *CHRIST*, but to his church. As the *Hebrew* את being in the feminine gender intimates.

† The end of the commanding law is righteouſneſs, *Rom.* x. 4. The end of the violated law is puniſhment, *Gal.* iii. 10. Both theſe ends are anſwered by the interpoſition of an obedient and crucified REDEEMER, but on no other ſcheme, and in no other manner whatever.

content with errant deficiency, when the moſt ſinleſs obedience, and the moſt exalted perfection are what it demands.

Do you mean by *Antinomianiſm*, ſuch a contrariety to the law, as diſregards its duties, and violates its precepts? Then the apoſtle *Paul* ſhall reply, *The grace of GOD, which bringeth ſalvation, hath appeared unto all men; teaching us, that, denying ungodlineſs and worldly luſts, we ſhould live ſoberly, righteouſly, and godly.*—*The grace of GOD*, his infinitely-free favour, of which we have a ſpecimen in the preceding texts, which ſcorns to be ſhackled with conditions, or meanly dependent on human endeavours.—This grace, requiring nothing of the creature, but *bringing ſalvation*, ſpiritual and eternal ſalvation, finiſhed by the incarnate CREATOR, and free for the chiefeſt of ſinners. This grace being revealed in the goſpel, being diſcerned by faith, and thus appearing in luſtre, and with power, to *all men*—to men of every rank, every age, every character; making no difference between the ſervant and his maſter, between the ruddy ſtripling and the hoary ſire; between the vile proſtitute and the chaſte veſtal, but opening its inexhauſtible treaſures, to be received by one as well as the other—This grace does what? "Cauſe Antinomianiſm," or practical ungodlineſs, "to come in with a full tide?" Quite the reverſe.—It repreſſes it like an immovable barrier. It *teaches us to deny* *, to renounce ungodlineſs, *all ungodlineſs*; not only external groſs abominations, but *wordly luſts* alſo, every vitious inclination, and every irregular deſire. Farther, it teaches us to live *ſoberly*, with regard to ourſelves, *righteouſly* to-

 wards

* The word is αρνησαμενοι, which does not ſignify, to aboliſh totally, or to deſtroy utterly; but to diſavow and renounce, to refuſe admittance, or not to yield compliance. There may be, even in the regenerate, ſome remainders of ungodlineſs: but, influenced by grace, they will conſtantly turn a deaf ear to its ſolicitations, or reſolutely ſay nay to its demands.

wards our neighbours, and *godly* to our great CREATOR.

The original word is particularly beautiful and significant; it is not τασσει, *preſcribeth*, by way of rule, nor επιτασσει, *enjoineth*, by way of authority; but παιδευουσα, *teacheth*, by way of inſtruction, pointeth out the effectual method of obeying the precepts, and conforming to the rule. A tyrant may command his ſlave to write, or make a proficiency in writing. A kind tutor forms him to it, ſhews him how to do it, and renders, what otherwiſe would be an irkſome, perhaps an impracticable taſk, both eaſy and pleaſant.—So this grace, clearly manifeſted in the underſtanding, and cordially apprehended by the will, renders every duty of holineſs both practicable and pleaſant; it gives us a heart and a hand, and ability to exerciſe ourſelves unto univerſal godlineſs.

CHRIST has performed all that was conditionary for me, ſays *Aſpaſio*. "Has he repented and believed "for you?" ſays Mr *Weſley;* a queſtion already anſwered in the dialogues.—"No;" replies Mr *Weſley*, "not anſwered, but evaded. He performed all that "was conditionary in the covenant of works, is no-"thing to the purpoſe; for we are not talking of that, "but of the covenant of grace." Give me leave to tell you, Sir, that you are greatly miſtaken here; we are talking, at leaſt we ought to be talking, of the covenant of works, when we talk of the covenant which *CHRIST* came under. It was a covenant of works to him, which, by his execution of it, became a covenant of grace for us. He became anſwerable for our debt; the debt was exacted, without the leaſt abatement. In this reſpect, GOD *ſpared not his own Son*: And is not this the tenor, are not ſuch the effects of a covenant of works?

CHRIST is called the *Surety of a better covenant;* that is, a ſurety provided and admitted by a better covenant: in this peculiarity, infinitely momentous

and

and comfortable, the new covenant is better; becauſe it brings in a ſubſtitute, to diſcharge what was contracted under the old, which neither provided, nor allowed, nor knew any ſuch thing.—It is written, *CHRIST was made under the law*, therefore not under a covenant of grace. If you can ſhew me, in the conſtruction of the law, any hint of faith in the merits of another, or any mention of repentance unto life, I will retract my opinion, that *CHRIST* performed whatever was conditionary; I will do honour to thoſe genteel expreſſions, and ſubmit to thoſe cogent arguments, "'Tis not true—'Tis nothing to the "purpoſe—'Tis abſolutely falſe."

"If *CHRIST*'s perfect obedience be ours, we "have no more need of pardon than *CHRIST* him-"ſelf. The conſequence is good, you have ſtarted "an objection which you cannot anſwer."—It is anſwered in the dialogues; whether in a ſatisfactory, or inſufficient manner, the reader muſt determine.—But ſuppoſe we admit the conſequence; it implies no more than the apoſtle affirms—*By one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are ſanctified.* Let me tranſcribe your own * explication of this paſſage.—"He "hath done" (obſerve, you yourſelf ſpeak of *CHRIST*'s doing; in this place *only* of *CHRIST*'s doing; yet I would not be ſo injurious to your good ſenſe, as to imagine that you exclude his *ſuffering*) "all that was needful, in order to their full reconci-"liation with GOD." This expoſition I approve, as far as it goes; only you have omitted one very weighty circumſtance, comprehended in the word "ever;" by this doing and ſuffering, believers are fully and perfectly reconciled, not for a day only, or for any particular time, but *for ever*. The pardon is irrevocable; the bleſſing unalienable. Not like the *moon*, which now waxes, and anon wanes; but like the *ſun*, which

* Explanatory notes *in loc.*

which is always the same; ever shines with the same plenitude of rays; and needs only to appear, in order to appear unchangeably bright.

This reminds me of a more direct answer to your difficulty. The repeated pardon, which believers implore, is only a witness bearing to the truth, or a repeated manifestation of it to our consciences.—Will you find fault with this doctrine? Might you not, for the very same reason, say, if the atonement of *CHRIST*'s death was absolutely perfect, there could be no need of his intercession at GOD's right hand? Yes, for the actual application of the great atonement, and the continual communication of its happy fruits, this intercession is necessary. So, though our justification is complete, though our sins have all been laid upon the LORD, and are not to be done away by some duties of our own, but already done away by the *sacrifice of* HIMSELF; yet the application of this blessing, the revelation of it to our hearts, is daily, hourly, incessantly needful. Therefore he saith, speaking of his vineyard the church, *I will water it every moment.*—Whereby? in what manner? what spiritual blessings correspond with watering the thirsty soil?—The discovery of complete pardon, of complete acceptance, of complete salvation in *CHRIST*. This will make the soul like a watered garden;—this will cause joy and holiness to blossom as a rose.

Both the branches of the law, the preceptive and the penal, in the case of guilt contracted, must be satisfied. "Not so."—If not, one of them must pass unsatisfied and unfulfilled. Whereas, our LORD declares, that *heaven and earth shall pass away, sooner than one jot or one tittle of the law shall fail* of its accomplishment. Will you undertake to prove, either that the preceptive, or else that the penal part of the law, does not constitute so much as one jot or one tittle of its contents? Then, and then only, your assertion

ſertion may conſiſt with our LORD's declaration. This will be an undertaking as adventurous as your next is diſingenuous.

"Not ſo; *CHRIST*, by his death alone" (ſo our church teaches), "fully ſatisfied for the ſins of the "whole world."—*By his death alone*, that is, in contradiſtinction to all human works, as efficient or adjutant cauſes: *fully ſatisfied*, that is, without having, and without needing the concurrence of any human ſatisfaction. It is ſpoken in oppoſition to our endeavours, not to his own moſt glorious obedience. But do you really want to be informed that our church means no ſuch thing, as you would inſinuate? Have you never heard her profeſs, and require to believe, what *Aſpaſio* maintains? If not, be pleaſed to read the quotations from her homilies, which he has produced, vol. III. pag. 48, 49.*. Read theſe, and I cannot but think, you have modeſty enough to bluſh at an attempt, to palm upon the public, ſuch an apparent miſrepreſentation of our venerable mother.

"The

* As this book may poſſibly fall into the hands of ſome perſons, who have not the book, entitled *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*; I will, for their ſakes, tranſcribe one of the teſtimonies, to which we are referred.

In the homily concerning the ſalvation of mankind, we read the following words:—"The apoſtle toucheth three things, "which muſt go together in juſtification. On GOD's part, "his great mercy and grace. On *CHRIST*'s part, the "ſatisfaction of GOD's juſtice, or the price of our redemption, by the offering of his body, and ſhedding of his pre-"cious blood, with fulfilling of the law perfectly. On our "part, true and lively faith in the merits of *JESUS* "*CHRIST*, which yet is not ours, but by GOD's working "in us." You ſee, according to the judgment of our reformers, not only the offering of *CHRIST*'s body, and the ſhedding of *CHRIST*'s blood, but alſo his perfect fulfilling of the law, are the adequate price of our redemption. Yet Mr *Weſley* is pleaſed to exclude the latter; and ventures to affirm that he has the authority of our church for ſuch an opinion, and for ſuch a practice.

" The ſame great truth, is manifeſtly taught in the " xxxiſt article."—What? That *CHRIST*, by his *death alone*, or by *ſhedding his blood alone*, *without fulfilling the law perfectly*, ſatisfied for the ſins of the world? Then the articles and the homilies moſt flatly contradict one another.—Upon this you aſk, " Is it " therefore fair, is it honeſt, for any one to plead the " articles of our church in defence of abſolute pre- " deſtination?" Indeed, Sir, I know not what you mean by this interrogatory, or at what you aim. Does *Aſpaſio* plead the articles for any ſuch purpoſe? Not that he ſhould be afraid, in caſe there was an evident occaſion, to advance ſuch a plea, and perhaps might put Mr *Weſley* to greater difficulty than he is aware of, in order to elude the force of it.—But he does not in this place come within view of the point; nor ſo much as remotely hint at it. No, nor in any part of the two volumes, does he once touch upon *abſolute predeſtination*, much leſs does he plead the articles of our church in its defence. So that your inferential word " therefore" is a concluſion without premiſes.

Abſolute predeſtination is a phraſe not to be found in all the dialogues, or in any of the letters. But it is a phraſe which Mr *Weſley* thinks to be alarming and diſguſting, on which Mr *Weſley* has learned to ſay many horrible and ſhocking things; therefore be it right or wrong, be it true or falſe, *Aſpaſio* ſhall be charged with the obnoxious expreſſion.—When he mentions predeſtination, it is in the very words of ſcripture; without dwelling upon the ſubject; without reſting his cauſe upon it; without attempting either to explain or to eſtabliſh it. This he leaves, and ever will leave, to clearer hands and abler pens.—As to your " abſolute," this is not what *Aſpaſio* ſpeaks, but what Mr *Weſley* would make him ſpeak; a word, which in this connection he never uſed, nor ſo much as dreamed of uſing; for which reaſon, I call it, not *his*, but

but *yours*.—May I not then retort your own queſtion? and aſk, Is it fair, is it honeſt, to put into your friend's mouth words which he never uſed, and then exclaim againſt them?

What follows in this paragraph is prodigious indeed. "Seeing the xviith article barley defines the "term;" that is, the church does not believe the doctrine, nor require any ſuch belief from her members? Why then does ſhe ſelect it for one of the articles? why pronounce it agreeable to GOD's word? why forbid diſputation againſt it? Pity, but we had been acquainted with this fine diſtinction when we were ſtudents at *Oxford*.—We then declared our approbation of the academical ſtatutes; we engaged to obſerve them all, and confirmed our engagement with an oath.—But how eaſily might we have eluded the obligation, if, when called upon for conformity and obedience, this ſalvo had come into our heads; "The "univerſity does not, in theſe ſtatutes, ſet forth our "duty, but barely defines the terms; ſhe does not "inſiſt upon a conformity, but only flouriſhes a little "upon terms, and leaves us to obey or diſobey, as "we ſhall feel ourſelves inclined."

"Barely defines the term, without either affirming "or denying the thing."—How! does ſhe not affirm the *thing*, when ſhe ſtyles it an *excellent benefit of GOD*? declares it to be *full of ſweet*, *pleaſant*, and *unſpeakable comfort* to the godly? that it *greatly eſtabliſhes and confirms their faith of eternal ſalvation*, and *fervently kindles their love towards* GOD? "Not affirm the "thing!"—when ſhe expreſsly aſcribes ſuch fruits and conſequents to it! This is not only affirming, but affirming with the higheſt approbation, like proclaiming the king, and placing the crown upon his head.

In one part of your *Preſervative*, you enumerate, and very properly diſplay, what you call "the five "benefits of baptiſm."—Suppoſe a *Quaker*, upon read-

ing this paſſage, ſhould ſay, "Friend *Weſley*, thou "barely defineſt the term, thou neither affirmeſt nor "denieſt the thing.—This is no proof that thou thyſelf "believeſt a tittle of water-baptiſm, or wouldſt have "thy readers believe the reality of any ſuch ordi-"nance." Should the *Quaker* argue thus, he would argue juſt like yourſelf. But I apprehend he would not be ſo boldly diſingenuous, he would rather confeſs; "Friend *John* doth certainly maintain and be-"lieve theſe things; but his opinion is miſtaken, and "his arguments are inconcluſive."—"The xxxiſt "article totally overthrows predeſtination, and razes "it from the foundation." If ſo, it makes one article contradict another; conſequently, weakens the authority, and undermines the credibility of them all. In this article are two points more particularly proper for our inquiry: The *great ſalvation*, and the *number of the ſaved*.—I cannot but query, whether you believe the former, or rightly underſtand the latter?

The *great ſalvation*, expreſſed in the following words; "The offering of CHRIST once made, is "that perfect redemption, propitiation and ſatisfac-"tion for all the ſins of the whole world, both ori-"ginal and actual." If I take theſe words as I am enjoined, in the literal and grammatical ſenſe, I muſt believe, that CHRIST engaged to ſatisfy offended juſtice, for every ſin which I have committed, or ſhall commit, throughout my whole life. My paſt ſins at that time had no more exiſtence, than my future ſins have at this hour; but both were equally laid upon my LORD.

Having undertaken this greateſt of all works, I muſt believe that he fully accompliſhed it; and actually ſatisfied for all my tranſgreſſions, of every kind and every date.—A poſſibility, or mere *chance* of being redeemed, can never be reckoned a perfect redemption; neither would our SAVIOUR have paid down a poſitive price for a precarious conditional good; much

much less would he have paid an immense, an infinite price, upon a bare uncertainty, whether it should take an effect, or ever obtain its desired end.—I believe therefore, that the satisfaction is made for *me;* that GOD has received the all-sufficient atonement in behalf of all my provocations; and that there is no more ground of condemnation for me a vile sinner, than there is room for the prosecution of an insolvent, all whose debts are defrayed, even to the very last mite.

The number of the saved, expressed in those words —*the sins of the whole world.* This I acknowledge to be the language of scripture; and I promise myself you will bear with me, while I offer my thoughts concerning the occasion and the import of such language.

In the *antediluvian* and *patriarchal* ages, the LORD JEHOVAH confined his favour to a few particular families.—When he formed his *Israel* into a commonwealth, he chose them to himself, and separated them from all other nations. To them he gave his oracles, his ordinances, and his covenants; yea, he honoured and indulged them with his divine presence: In this the *Israelites* gloried; they appropriated this privilege to themselves, and held other people at a distance, looking upon them as strangers, and without GOD in the world; hence that chosen seed spares not to say, "We are thine; thou never bare'st rule over them; "they were not called by thy name."—At the commencement of the MESSIAH's kingdom, the LORD purposed to change the scene, and vary the dispensation, by admitting both *Jews* and *Gentiles* to an interest in the great salvation; as they were equally chargeable with sin, and equally liable to the curse, they should now stand upon a level, be equally sharers in that divine SAVIOUR, who submits to be made sin, and to be made a curse for both alike. This the HOLY GHOST expressly and repeatedly promised, *He* (that is, the REDEEMER which is to come) *shall speak peace unto the Heathen; his do-*

minion ſhall be from ſea even unto ſea, and from the river even to the end of the earth.

Notwithſtanding ſuch prophecies, and ſuch promiſes, our LORD himſelf, when he entered upon his miniſtry, acted a diſcriminating part, and kept up the *partition-wall;* in purſuance of that declaration, *I am not ſent, but unto the loſt ſheep of the houſe of Iſrael.* When he ſent forth his diſciples to preach and to teach, he gave them alſo a command to ſhew the ſame partial regard; *Go ye not into the way of the Gentiles.* This conduct of our LORD, both under the Old Teſtament and the New, confirmed the *Jews* in their ſelf-flattering notion, that they were, and ever ſhould be, a favourite nation, and a peculiar people. The *Gentiles*, on the other hand, were no leſs diſcouraged: apprehending, that as they were, ſo they ever ſhould be, *aliens from the commonwealth of Iſrael.* But in order to convince the *Jews* of their miſtake, in claiming the bleſſing of *Abraham* to themſelves, and in order to aſſure the poor diſcarded *Gentiles* that they ſhould be *fellow-heirs and of the ſame body;* our LORD, in his laſt charge to his apoſtles, alters the ſtyle of his commiſſion, and enlarges the ſphere of their ſeveral departments. It is now no longer, *Go not into the way of the Gentiles;* but quite the reverſe, *Go teach all nations, all the world*, yea, and *every creature; Whoſoever believeth*, whether *Jew* or *Gentile, ſhall be ſaved.*

Still the *Jews* were hardly induced to give the right hand of fellowſhip to their brethren the *Gentiles.*—For St *Peter* cries, with ſome indignation; *Not ſo, LORD.* Still the *Gentiles*, hardly perſuaded that they ſhould be partakers of the grace, reaſoned againſt themſelves; *The LORD hath utterly ſeparated me from his people.* Therefore the LORD, to intercept all the deſponding objections of the *latter*, and to bring down the high diſdainful imaginations of the *former*, declares in a variety of places, that the difference no longer ſubſiſts, that *CHRIST* has thrown down the partition-wall,

and

and laid all plain, and common, and free.—Though the giving of the law pertained to *Israel only*, the *LORD JESUS* gave himself a ransom for ALL PEOPLE. Though the paschal lamb extended its influence only to the circumcision, the LAMB of GOD is a *propitiation for the sins of the whole world*, even though it be not circumcised. And now GOD would have all men, whether bond or free, *Jews* or *Gentiles*, *Greeks*, or *Barbarians*, to be saved, by coming unto the knowledge of the faith.

This account gives us the true cause, and points out the intended use, of such universal phrases. They are calculated to abate the pride of the *Jews*, to encourage the despised *Gentiles;* and by excluding *none*, they give encouragement for *all* to come, because, though every *individual* person will not be saved, yet *whosoever cometh shall in no wise be cast out.* By this interpretation, the phrase is neither inconsistent with other texts, neither does our church contradict herself.

Upon the whole, you will please to observe, that I should never have touched upon this subject, had not your objections, far fetched and forced as they are, given me a kind of challenge. And now I have touched upon the subject, it is not as a champion for the cause, but only to shew the weakness and the inconsistency of your arguing, how little you avail yourself even on a point, where you think opposition vain, and your arm irresistible.

"Believers, who are notorious transgressors in "themselves, have a sinless obedience in *CHRIST;*" this passage you select as faulty, I presume, because it is opposite to your favourite tenet, "*perfection* in per-"sonal holiness.—By *notorious*, I mean *acknowledged*, *confessed*, *indisputably such.* If you are not such a transgressor, why do you daily confess yourself, "a "miserable sinner?" Why do you acknowledge, that you are "tied and bound with the chain of your sins;" and declare before all men, that "there is no health

"in

" in you ?" All this Mr *Wesley* speaks with his lips, and, I would hope, believes in his heart. Yet all this does not amount " to a *notorious* transgressor." Pray then, good Sir, inform us, what sort of transgressor is described by all these expressions.

You cry out, " O syren song!" The Psalmist would have taught you a better exclamation. If this is the case, *let us rejoice with trembling*.—Are we notorious transgressors in ourselves? The consciousness of this is the strongest motive to humility.—Have we a sinless obedience in *CHRIST*? The belief of this is an abundant source of joy. When you add, " Pleasing " sound to *James Wheatly! Thomas Williams! James* " *Riley!*" I am quite ashamed of your meanness, and grieved at your uncharitable rashness. How unworthy is such a procedure, either of the gentleman, the Christian, or the man of sense! Unworthy the *gentleman*, to stigmatize by name, and expose to the most public infamy. Unworthy the *Christian*, whose charity concealeth, rather than divulgeth and proclaimeth upon the house-tops. Unworthy the *man of sense*, who knows that the miscarriages of a professor are no argument against the soundness of a doctrine. If they were, would not your own principles totter? Nay, how could Christianity itself stand?

Elijah failed in his resignation, and even *Moses* himself spake unadvisedly with his lips. " It is true," says Mr *Wesley*. " But if you could likewise fix some " blot upon venerable *Samuel*, and beloved *Daniel*, it " would prove nothing." I have no desire to fix a blot; but if I find it in the most accomplished character, this proves the proposition, which *Aspasio* maintains; " That the very best of men fall short; that " the very best of men will be found *guilty*, if *tried* " *by the righteous law*:—That the very best of men " have nothing more to plead *for acceptance* with the " HIGH and HOLY one, than the criminal, who " yesterday murdered his benefactor, to-morrow is

" to

" to be executed for his crime, and is now flying to " the redemption that is in *CHRIST JESUS* for " the chief of sinners."

" No scripture teaches that the holiness of Christians " is to be measured by that of any *Jew*." I should be afraid to advance such a position, after having read that general exhortation, *Be ye followers of them, who through faith and patience inherit the promises;* and those more particular references to the ancient saints, comprised in the *eleventh chapter to the Hebrews*. Were not they *Jews?* Does not the apostle propose them as *patterns* for our imitation? Is not this his language, *Let us* act in conformity to their practice? —*The spirit of CHRIST was in them;* and " they ob- " tained, (even from the supreme JUDGE) a good " report." Agreeably to this divine testimonial, we are directed to learn from *Abel*, a fiduciary dependence on the great atonement; and from *Enoch*, a life of communion with a reconciled GOD. The prophets are recommended to our contemplation, as " ex- " amples of suffering affliction, and of patience." *Elijah* is set before us as an instance of persevering and successful prayer: and we are directed to walk in the steps of our father *Abraham*'s faith. This was the counsel of an apostle to others; this was the aim of an apostle with regard to himself; therefore I think, it can never be unworthy of you, or unfit for the most advanced among your disciples. For my part, I shall reckon myself truly happy; I shall bless the day, whereon I was born; if I may but be enabled to follow the footsteps of these illustrious leaders, though

— — *non passibus æquis.*

That Christians ought to rise above the level of the common *Jews*, I freely own. Mr *Wesley*'s mistake seems to lie in confounding the *common* with the *uncommon*, in not discerning the difference between *any* and *every;* between *some* and *all*. Some *Jews* were blessed with extraordinary endowments; they had distinguished communications of the spirit of wisdom and holiness.

holineſs. They were as the "ſtones of a crown, lift-"ed up as an enſign upon his land." Their great atchievements and eminent attainments are deſcribed in the aforementioned chapter, which may truly be ſtyled the *golden legend;* great things impoſſible to fleſh and blood, they both performed and ſuffered; ſuch as characteriſe a ſaint of the higheſt rank.—To imitate theſe, is the duty of *all* Chriſtians; to equal them, is the privilege of *few*.

Let me *illuſtrate* this ſentiment; the reader, I apprehend, will hardly think it needs *confirmation*.—Every graduate in the univerſity, much more every miniſter of the goſpel, ought to exceed the ſchoolboy in learning and knowledge.—Yet there have been ſchoolboys with whom few miniſters, and fewer graduates, will venture to compare themſelves. A recent inſtance of this kind, we have in the famous *Baratier*. This wonderful youth, when he was but four years old, ſpoke *French* to his mother, *Latin* to his father, *High Dutch* to his maid. At the age of ſix, he explained the *Hebrew* text, as ready as if it had been his native *German*. When other lads are ſcarce able to read with fluency and propriety their mother-tongue, he was not only acquainted with, but maſter of five ſeveral languages. In his eleventh year he publiſhed a learned *Latin* diſſertation, and tranſlated a book of travels out of *Hebrew* into *French*. While a mere boy he was qualified to diſpute with profeſſors of the ſciences, was honoured with a ſeat at an eccleſiaſtical ſynod, and admitted to the degree of doctor in philoſophy. Upon this narrative I ſhall only obſerve, that many of the *Jews*, whoſe names are immortalized in ſcripture, were, in faith, in godlineſs, and all that is exemplary, ſo many *Baratiers*.

"Do not the beſt of men frequently feel diſorder in "their affections? Do they not often complain, When "I would do good, evil is preſent with me?" "I "believe not." What a proof is here! How well

ſuited

ſuited to its office! which is to control the current and over-rule the evidence of ancient and modern conſent. But why don't you believe what *Aſpaſio* ſuppoſes? Is your diſbelief grounded on fact? Are you acquainted with any people, who feel no diſorder in their affections? who always do good in the completeſt manner? and never have evil preſent with them? If ſo, what are their names? where do they live? We would go many miles to ſee them. You have no averſion to the mention of names, when cenſure is the motive, and public diſgrace the effect; why ſhould you be ſo reluctant, when honour and diſtinguiſhed reſpect would be the conſequence?

Do they not ſay, *We groan, being burdened* with the workings of inbred corruption? "This is not the "meaning of the text. The whole context ſhews "the cauſe of that groaning was their longing to be "with *CHRIST*." You need not on this occaſion rummage the context, or take a journey to find what is at your door. The ſentence itſelf ſhews, as plainly as words can ſhew, the cauſe of their groaning. We groan, it is not ſaid becauſe we long to be with *CHRIST*. This might be a truth; but this is not the cauſe aſſigned, "We groan becauſe we are burdened." Burdened with what? *Aſpaſio* anſwers, with a body of ſin and death, or with what the apoſtle himſelf ſtyles τὸ σῶμα. This, whatever it means, was the load that encumbered them, oppreſſed them, and made them ſigh ardently for deliverance. Does not this ſignify all the infirmities and diſorders of the preſent mortal ſtate? Among which the ſad effects of inbred *corruption*, are none of the leaſt. Theſe gave thoſe magnanimous, but pious ſouls, more uneaſineſs than all other kinds of affliction whatever *.

The

* "We groan, being burdened, with a ſenſe of our ſpiritual infirmities, and with the workings of inbred corruption." This is *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation. "We groan, being burdened "with numberleſs infirmities, temptations, and ſins." This is

The cure of ſin will be perfected in heaven. "Nay, "ſurely in paradiſe.—*Aſpaſio* knows no difference between paradiſe and heaven. Paradiſe is the kingdom where *CHRIST* reigns; and is not this heaven? Paradiſe is the region where the tree of life grows; and is not this heaven? Heaven denotes the place; paradiſe deſcribes its nature, a place of conſummate bliſs and abſolute perfection, where is the fulneſs of joy and pleaſure for evermore.—However, if it can be proved, that they are different abodes, and imply different ſtates *; then *Aſpaſio* would be underſtood to ſay, the cure of ſin is completed in paradiſe; or as ſoon as the believer drops his fleſh, and enters the inviſible world.

This (a perfect conformity to GOD) is a noble prerogative of the beatific viſion. "No;" ſays Mr *Weſley*. Though St *John*, one would think, had ſettled and aſcertained this point beyond all contradiction—*We ſhall be like him, for we ſhall ſee him, as he is.*—"We ſhall," which intimates, that at preſent we are not perfectly like him—"For," which denotes the efficient cauſe of this advancement and felicity; this complete

Mr *Weſley*'s interpretation, in his Expoſitory notes on the New Teſtament. Yet here he denies what there he affirms.—It is ſaid, I think of *Iſhmael; His hand will be againſt every man.* Mr *Weſley* goes a ſtep farther. His hand is againſt *himſelf*, as well as againſt every body elſe.

* St *Paul*, I am aware, ſpeaks of heaven and ſpeaks of paradiſe, 2 *Cor.* xii. 2, 4. So does *David* ſpeak of *riſing up into the hill of the LORD*, and of *ſtanding in his holy place.*—But as the ſame thing, though variouſly expreſſed, is meant by the *Pſalmiſt*, I think we may not unreaſonably underſtand the *Apoſtle* in the ſame manner. If they had been different habitations, methinks he would have mentioned *paradiſe* firſt, and then the third *heavens.* Otherwiſe he tells the ſtory but awkwardly; for he firſt mentions his arrival at the third heavens, and then at paradiſe; that is, according to Mr *Weſley*; firſt he was led into the *preſence*, and then introduced to the *antechamber.*

complete transformation into the divine image.—"We shall see him," no longer through a glass, but face to face. We shall receive the clearest manifestation of his ineffable holiness and glory, which will have just the same effect upon our souls as the imprinted seal has upon the melting wax.

"It would then come too late. If sin remains in "us till the day of judgment, it will remain in us "for ever." You suppose, that the beatific vision is not enjoyed, till the day of judgment. But in this you seem to err, not knowing the scripture. I have a *desire*, says the apostle, *to be dissolved*.—And what is the consequence, the immediate consequence of dissolution? *To be with CHRIST;* in his presence; before his throne; and is not this the beatific vision; *Willing* (says the inspired writer) *to be absent from the body, and present with the LORD*. Here is no hint of any intermediate state, but the very moment in which the saints depart from their bodies, they are present with the LORD; and if with the LORD, then in the highest heavens; then at the fountain-head of felicity; then amidst the *beatific vision*.—To heaven *Elijah* was conveyed in his fiery chariot; and into heaven the first *martyr* was received by his compassionate SAVIOUR. Neither of them waited in some intervening mansion, as a kind of *lobby* to the heaven of heavens. This is the *Popish* notion, and very closely connected with the chimera of purgatory; so closely connected, that if you take away the former, the latter drops into nothing.—I am sorry, your opinions, Sir, are so much like the errors of the man of sin.

Our present blessedness does not consist in being free from sin. "I really think it does." Spoke like Mr *Wesley*. "I think," is still the *argumentum palmarium*. "I think," is the heavy artillery, which is to demolish brigades at a blow; only here it is strengthened and enforced by that emphatical word "really."—

But if our preſent bleſſedneſs does *really* conſiſt in being free from ſin, where are your bleſſed perſons? We may truly ſay,

Apparent rari nantes in gurgite vaſto. VIRG.

No; this can hardly be ſaid. *Virgil*'s deſcription is too full; inſtead of ſeeing a very *few*, here and there one, popping up their heads, in the great and wide ocean of the world, we are not able to find ſo much as an *individual*. Shew us *one*, only *one* of theſe angels in fleſh and blood, and it ſufficeth us. Whereas, if you perſiſt in maintaining your *ſinleſs perfection*, yet cannot produce a ſingle inſtance, to exemplify your notion, will you not give too juſt a handle for that ſarcaſtic reflection, uſed on another occaſion?

With witneſſes many this cauſe did abound, (*drown'd,*
With ſome that were hang'd, and ſome that were
And ſome that were loſt, and ſome never found.

Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words—"It (our preſent im-"perfection) perpetually reminds us of a moſt im-"portant truth, that our preſent bleſſedneſs conſiſts, "not in being free from all ſin, but in having no ſin "imputed to us." He took particular care to guard his meaning from miſconſtruction, by adding the word *all:* leſt this word, becauſe it is little of ſtature, ſhould be overlooked, he printed it in *Italics*. But all this precaution is thrown away upon Mr *Weſley*. He takes no notice of this ſame little word; nay, he ſhuts it entirely out of his quotation; as though he ſhould ſay, "Where is the harm of clapping under the "hatches ſuch a puny inſignificant monoſyllable? I "would have it to know, I ſhall ere long turn adrift "more plump and portly words than that."

Aſpaſio alſo took care to confirm his ſentiments by a reference to ſcripture; he ſupported himſelf by the authority of King *David*.—Mr *Weſley* having a little while ago laboured to depretiate, now ventures to contradict

tradict the royal *Pſalmiſt*. *Bleſſed* (ſays the Pſalmiſt) *is the man*—who is free from ſin? who is perfectly ſanctified? This is not the doctrine which the ſweet ſinger of *Iſrael* teaches; but bleſſed is he *whoſe tranſgreſſion is forgiven, whoſe ſin is covered*. Deeply impreſſed, and quite charmed with the contemplation of this moſt ſubſtantial happineſs, the ſacred writer proclaims it; repeats it; yes, a third time he celebrates it; crying out with ardour of joy, *Bleſſed is the man, unto whom the LORD imputeth no iniquity* *. Neither that iniquity which was formerly committed, nor that which ſtill defiles †.) Bleſſed indeed! May I live under a firm perſuaſion of my own particular intereſt in this unſpeakable privilege! May I find it made good to my ſoul, at the univerſal judgment! Then let others take the kingdoms of this world, and all the glory of them.—And as for *Aſpaſio*, he may reckon his credit ſafe, and his opinion fully authoriſed, while he eſpouſes the doctrine, and uſes the very words of the unerring SPIRIT.

"If we are not free from ſin, we are not Chriſtian "believers."—What an aſſertion is here! *Aſſertion*, for I dare not call it a *truth*.—If it was, who then could be ſaved? Not one of a thouſand; not two of a million; no, nor Mr *John Weſley* himſelf, ſince out of his own mouth he ſtands condemned. He makes this acknowledgment concerning himſelf and his followers, "We know by melancholy experience what "it is to neglect works of righteouſneſs." To corroborate his confeſſion, he adds, "We know and feel "by melancholy experience, what it is to ſwerve from "our firſt love. We feel by experience."—He is willing to run the hazard of tautology, rather than any ſhould ſuſpect the ſincerity and truth of his proteſtation.

* *Pſal.* xxxii. 1, 2. Should any objection ariſe from the next ſentence, the reader may ſee it anticipated, and ſuperſeded, in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, vol. II. p. 258, 259. of this edition.

† Pſal. xv. 3.

teſtation.—And can you after ſuch a confeſſion, after ſuch a proteſtation, pretend to be free from ſin? Is all this which you know of yourſelf, and *feel by experience*, conſiſtent with a *ſinleſs* ſtate? Juſt as much as a *lethargy* is conſiſtent with the vigour of *health*, or a ſhameful *flight* with a glorious *victory*. See, Sir, how you are entangled in your own net; how, without being chaſed by an enemy, you run yourſelf aground. Nor will all your dexterity, ſo long as you avow ſuch palpable inconſiſtencies, be able to ſet you clear.

You attempt to confirm your opinion by the apoſtle's declaration; *Being made free from ſin*.—But he and you mean different things by the ſame words.—He means being freed from the *dominion of ſin*.—This is agreeable to his own explanation; ſin (οὐ κυριευσει) ſhall not lord it over you;—it may *aſſault* you; it may *haraſs* you; it may gain ſome *advantage* over you; but it ſhall not obtain a *final victory*, not play the *tyrant* over you. To the expedience and neceſſity of this freedom, if ever we would approve ourſelves diſciples of *CHRIST*, or Chriſtians indeed, I readily ſubſcribe:—whereas, you mean being free from the very *remainders* of ſin. "Having a purity" ('tis your own explanation) "free from all mixture of "its contrary, and a reſignation excluding every de-"gree of ſelf-will." Againſt the exiſtence, or the poſſibility of this freedom, ſo long as we ſojourn in a body of fleſh, I enter my proteſt.

If we were perfect in piety, *CHRIST*'s prieſtly office would be ſuperſeded. "No, we ſhould ſtill "need his Spirit, and conſequently his interceſſion." But were we perfect, we ſhould receive the Spirit without an interceſſor.—An interceſſor implies an alienation between the two parties; or ſomething which, without the intervention of a third perſon, would create alienation.—The prieſtly office, whether of atoning, or of interceding, is founded on a ſtate of guilt; to this it bears an eſſential and invariable relation.

tion.—Does *CHRIST* exercise his priestly office in behalf of angels? No, because they excel in strength, and are perfect in holiness.—Will *CHRIST* exercise his priestly office, when all his saints are received into glory? No, because then there will be an absolute consummation both in body and soul, both in righteousness and happiness, and the mediatorial kingdom be delivered up to the FATHER.—Did *CHRIST* exercise his priestly office before *Adam* fell? No, because sin had no existence then, and then the language was, *Let man be blessed;* not, *Deliver him from going down into the pit.*

The objections laid to my charge in this paragraph, and the whole side of the leaf, proceed upon your favourite notion; *perfection* of holiness, even while we continue in houses of clay. As I look upon your foundation to be a mere delusion, I must of course conclude, all that you build upon it to be chimerical and delusory; therefore, till you prove your supposition, I have no reason to concern myself with any of your consequences deduced from it, or with any of your allegations relating to it. On one clause, however, let me bestow a slight animadversion.

Aspasio says, a sense of remaining inbred corruption will reconcile us to death; Mr *Wesley* replies, "Indeed it will not: nor will any thing do this like "perfect love."—Here I think you have missed the mark. Nothing can reconcile us to death but that which takes away its sting; and this is done only by the atonement of *CHRIST*. Nothing can reconcile us to death, but that which delivers us from its terror; and this is effected only by the sacrifice of our great HIGH PRIEST, which has converted the king of terrors into a messenger of peace: nothing can reconcile us unto death, but that which makes it desirable to depart, and gain to die; and this is owing, wholly owing to him who died for us, that whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Old

Old *Simon* found, that nothing could reconcile him to death, ſo much as a believing view of the LORD's *CHRIST*. Seeing GOD made fleſh; ſeeing him as his own SAVIOUR, he was enabled not only to acquieſce in the ſummons, but to welcome it as a deliverance.—He was enabled to ſay with compoſure, and complacency, *LORD, now letteſt thou thy ſervant depart in peace.*—Not becauſe I am weary of this imperfect ſtate; not becauſe I am perfect in divine love; but becauſe *mine eyes have ſeen thy ſalvation.* Though you may not like to imitate a *Jew*, I moſt heartily wiſh for myſelf, Let me die the death of this moſt venerable *Hebrew*, and let my latter end be like his!

If you ſtill perſiſt in your opinion, that nothing can reconcile you to diſſolution like the imagined *perfection* of your love, not the *blood*, by which the ſaints overcame; not the *righteouſneſs*, by which they reign in life; not the grace and power, which have ſwallowed up death in victory: I muſt then caution you to take heed leaſt you croſs, or attempt to croſs the *river*, in the boat of *vain confidence.* You have abridged, if I miſtake not, the *Pilgrim's Progreſs*, therefore can be at no loſs to underſtand my meaning.

One clauſe, I ſaid,—but I correct myſelf.—There is another, ſo very extraordinary, that you might juſtly charge me with inattention little ſhort of ſtupidity, if I ſhould paſs it over without notice. Theſe are the words,—"If we were perfect in piety, (St *John's* "word is perfect in love,) we ſhould ſtill be encom-"paſſed with infirmities, and liable to miſtakes, from "which words or actions might follow, even tho' the "heart was all love, which were not exactly right."

This is ſtrange! wondrous ſtrange indeed! Perfect, yet "encompaſſed with infirmities!" Perfect, "yet "doing actions, and ſpeaking words not exactly "right!" You are as ſingular in your *idea*, as you are ſtrenuous for the *doctrine of perfection.*—I know not any *Proteſtant* writer that pretends to maintain the latter,

latter, yourſelf only excepted; and as to the former, I think it could never enter into the head of any thing living, but Mr *Weſley*'s only. Perfect, "yet encom- "paſſed with infirmities," is juſt as ſound divinity, as true, yet addicted to lying, is ſound morality.

This is not the worſt property of your notion of perfection, that it is abſurd and ſelf-contradictory. A ſentiment may be *abſurd*, yet not very *pernicious*. But this is an error of the moſt malignant kind. This was at the bottom of the Phariſees pride, and ſpirited them on to ſeek juſtification by the works of the law. They knew full well, that their obedience was not complete, it did not come up to their ſacred and exalted ſtandard; but they had learned to ſoften and extenuate their diſobedience, into matters "not exactly right." —This is the cauſe, why people profeſſing Chriſtianity, ſee no form or comelineſs in *CHRIST*, ſo as to deſire him, with deſires that cannot be uttered. 'Tis true they are not perfect, they often offend;—but then the offences are only human *infirmities;* words and actions "not exactly right." With this, which is indeed "the ſyren ſong," they lull their ſouls into an inſenſibility of their ruined ſtate, and a diſregard of the all-ſufficient REDEEMER.

Curſed (ſays the law) *is every one that continueth not in all things*, whether they be great or ſmall.— And will you regard that as a mere infirmity, and conſiſtent with perfection, on which the divine law denounces a curſe; which the divine law threatens with all miſery here, and with everlaſting vengeance hereafter? The apoſtle would probably chaſtiſe the author or abettor of ſuch a conceit, in the following manner: "Wilt thou know, O vain man, that what "thou calleſt a matter "not exactly right," is moſt "horribly odious in the eye of GOD's infinite puri- "ty; deſerves eternal death in the eſtimate of his "infinite juſtice; and could never have been pardon-

" ed but by the atoning death of his infinitely-majeſ-
" tic Son !"

" Encompaſſed with infirmities, yet the heart all
" love ! Words and actions not exactly right, yet the
" man all perfection !" Theſe are all paradoxes which I never ſaw equalled, only in the writings of ſome high-flown Papiſts. Mr *Weſley*'s words are not far from a tranſlation ; they are, to a nicety, the ſenſe of thoſe very offenſive paſſages which I meet with in a couple of Popiſh zealots. *Andradius*, interpreter of the council of *Trent*, writes thus ; " * Venialia pec-
" cata tam ſunt minuta et levia, ut non adverſentur
" perfectioni charitatis, nec impedire poſſunt per-
" fectam aut abſolutam obedientiam." — *Lindenus*, another champion for the ſame bad cauſe, expreſſes himſelf in a more elegant, but in no leſs ſhocking a manner. " † Levicula vitiola lapſuum quotidianorum,
" aſpergines et nævulæ ſunt : quæ per ſe non maculant
" et contaminant, ſed quaſi pulviſculo leviter aſper-
" gunt vitam Chriſtianam : ut nihilominus tamen per
" ſe ſint perfecta, et undique immaculata renatorum
" opera in hac vita."—If Mr *Weſley* pleaſes to conſider theſe paſſages, I hope, he will be induced to alter his phraſe, and rectify his notions.—If he pleaſes to tranſlate theſe paſſages, his followers may have an opportunity of ſeeing, how nearly he approaches to ſome of the worſt errors of Popery ; and may hence be admoniſhed not to imbibe, without due examination,

* Venial ſins are ſo minute and trivial, that they do not oppoſe the perfection of our love, nor can they hinder our obedience from being abſolutely perfect.

† The little trifling faults which are owing to our daily ſlips or miſtakes, are like ſpecks, or almoſt imperceptible moles upon the body, which of themſelves do not ſtain or defile : but as it were, with ſmall particles of fine duſt, lightly ſprinkle the Chriſtian life ; ſo that, nevertheleſs, the works of the regenerate may be of themſelves perfect, and in all reſpects immaculate, even in this life.

tion, his doctrines; nor submit, with an implicit credulity, to his dictates.

"The charges of the law are all answered."—At this sentence Mr *Wesley* is highly offended. As the lion is said to lash himself into rage, so my objector stirs himself up into a graceful indignation; stirs *himself*, for there is nothing in the passage, or in the context, to awaken such a flame of zeal. If Mr *Wesley* had understood *Aspasio*, according to the whole tenor of his discourse, there would have been no room for bringing Count *Zinzendorf* upon the carpet, nor for making that injurious conclusion, *Then neither GOD nor man can claim any obedience to the law.*—This is what *Aspasio* means: The claims of the law, as a covenant of works;—the claims of the law, as being the condition of life and glory;—the claims of the law, as requiring perfect obedience on pain of eternal death; these claims are all satisfied by our most blessed and gracious SURETY.—If not, they are still incumbent upon us, and upon every child of man. A burden this, which neither *we nor our fathers were able to bear*, which, heavier than the sands of the sea, would have sunk us all into the nethermost hell.—This doctrine, therefore, is not "*Antinomianism* without a mask;" but it is the doctrine of *righteousness without works* *, and of justification *without the deeds of the law* †.

"Then neither GOD nor man can claim any obe-"dience to the law." Yes, GOD Almighty may, and GOD Almighty does claim our obedience to the law; as a rule of life, he requires a conformity to its precepts, as to the image of himself; he demands a performance of its duties, as the means of bringing glory to his name, and paying submission to his authority. And none will be so readily disposed, none will be so effectually enabled, to obey the *whole* law as those who see themselves made righteous by the

 obedience

* Rom. iv. 6. † Rom. iii. 28.

obedience of *CHRIST*, who are thereby delivered from that tremendous curſe, denounced on all ungodlineſs and unrighteouſneſs of men.

Aſpaſio thus exhorts his friend,—Let me deſire you to imagine, rather may the bleſſed SPIRIT enable you to believe, that your ſins are expiated, through the death of *JESUS CHRIST;* that a righteouſneſs is given you, by virtue of which you may have free and welcome acceſs to GOD.—"This is not "ſcriptural language," ſays Mr *Weſley*. Therefore it cannot be ſound doctrine, is his way of arguing. Harmleſs enough I muſt own. But what follows is not quite ſo modeſt. "I would ſimply ſay;" and ſurely what *I* would ſay, muſt be *unexceptionably right:* This is the concluſion we are to make; otherwiſe what you alledge, is of no weight at all.—"I would ſimply "ſay, By him we have acceſs to the FATHER." This is beyond all objection proper.—It is taken from the apoſtle, and it includes what *Aſpaſio* expreſſes.—The apoſtle's language is the ingot of gold; *Aſpaſio*'s ſentiment is a thread drawn, or a leaf beaten from it. Methinks, before I diſmiſs this topic, I would deſire you to turn back a moment, and reconſider what you have affirmed.—Your ſins are *expiated*, is not this ſcriptural language?—What elſe meaneth that expreſſion of the apoſtle? Εις το ιλασκεσθαι τας αμαρτιας του λαου. "To "make expiation for the ſins of the people *."—A righteouſneſs is given you, is not this the ſcriptural way of ſpeaking? "They who receive *the gift of* "*righteouſneſs*, ſhall *reign in life*."—"By which you "have *free acceſs to GOD;*" is not this both the dialect, and the doctrine of the HOLY GHOST? "We "have acceſs with confidence (not through our punc-"tual performance of any conditions, but) through "the faith of him;" by a fiducial reliance on our LORD's

* *Heb.* ii. 17, Εις το ιλασκεσθαι.—*Ad expiare*, i. e. *ut expiaret peccata populi, quibus expiatis, Deus nobis redderetur propitius.*

LORD's moſt precious obedience, blood, and merit.

"I have ſeen ſuch terrible effects of this unſcriptu-"ral way of ſpeaking."—Here I fancy you ſlip into a little miſtake; you forgot the diſtinction between the *uſe*, and the *abuſe* of a doctrine, a diſtinction which you can eaſily make on other occaſions. You have doubtleſs ſeen people, who uſe the moſt ſcriptural way of ſpeaking, yet act unſuitably to their language; what reflections aroſe in your mind, and what inference did you draw upon obſerving ſuch an inconſiſtency? You ſaid perhaps, "Their voice is *Jacob*'s voice; but "their hands are the hands of *Eſau*.—Hence it ap-"pears, that they are hypocrites.—They pretend one "thing, and are really another."—Make the ſame reflection, and draw the ſame inference, when you hear people talking of *imputed righteouſneſs*, yet ſee them looſing the reins to ungodlineſs; then you will be conſiſtent with yourſelf, and with truth; aſcribing the terrible effects, not to the wholeſome doctrine, but to the vitiated mind.

Where ſin abounded, *&c.* Mr *Weſley* rejects *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation of this text, and offers one of his own; one, which he had given us a little while ago; and now ſerves a ſecond time, without any conſiderable variation, at our table.—I ſhall only refer the reader to page 150. where he will find this text conſidered, and Mr *Weſley*'s expoſition canvaſſed.

In this and the two following paragraphs you find fault with the phraſe *imputed;* yet you ſay, "Con-"cerning the thing there is no queſtion." You would diſcard that particular form of expreſſion; yet you add, "As to the doctrine we are agreed." Then, according to your own confeſſion, all theſe your objections are a mere ſtrife of words.—Surely ſuch a man as Mr *Weſley* ſhould know how to make a better uſe of pen, ink, and paper, than to litigate about letters and ſyllables.—If I thought myſelf contending only about

about the moſt preciſely proper form of expreſſing the ſame thing, I ſhould be aſhamed of my employ, and would this inſtant lay down my pen; whereas I apprehend, that we are not agreed as to *doctrine*, that there is a material and very wide difference between us.—My opinion, or rather, my *faith* is, that our LORD's obedience to the moral law in profeſſed ſubmiſſion to its authority, and in exact conformity to its precepts; his performance of all holy duties, and his exerciſe of all heavenly graces, that all this is a moſt eſſential and diſtinguiſhed part of his merit, that this is of higher dignity and greater value than the whole world, and all the righteouſneſs in it.—That the divine law is hereby more ſignally honoured, than it could have been honoured by the uninterrupted obedience of *Adam* and all his poſterity.—That GOD's juſtice, holineſs, truth, receive greater glory from theſe unparalleled acts of duty, than from all the ſervices of angels and men in their ſeveral wonderful orders; that this *active* righteouſneſs, together with his moſt meritorious *ſufferings*, are the ground and cauſe of my acceptance with GOD, are the very thing which procures and effects my juſtification, making me not barely acquitted from guilt, but truly righteous, yea, perfectly righteous, and that before the GOD of infinite penetration and purity.—This is a view of the doctrine, incomparably magnificent and inexpreſſibly comfortable. If you agree with your friend in all theſe particulars, ſpeak and write conformably to ſuch agreement; then you will never again hear from him in this manner, neither will he receive any more ſuch favours from you as the letter now under conſideration; then we ſhall be perfectly joined together "in the ſame mind, and in the ſame "judgment."

Alas! this union, I fear, is not ſo eaſily to be effected.—Mr *Weſley* ſtill inſiſts, and ſtill urges, "The au-"thority of our church (which *Aſpaſio* pleads) and of "thoſe

" thoſe eminent divines (whoſe teſtimony *Aſpaſio* al-
" ledges), does not touch thoſe particular forms of
" expreſſion."—Juſtification through imputed righ-
teouſneſs, or being made righteous through the obe-
dience of *CHRIST*, I ſuppoſe are the forms of ex-
preſſion intended. Theſe, it ſeems, none of the quo-
tations *confirm*, *eſtabliſh*, no, nor *touch*, in Mr *Weſley*'s
opinion at leaſt; but I am inclined to hope, that the
generality of readers will be of a different perſuaſion,
and allow that the quotations and the expreſſions
touch and reſemble one another, as much as the wings
of the cherubim in the ancient ſanctuary *.

" Does not touch." No! not yet? Then we muſt
have recourſe to ſome other authority; and ſuch a one
I have at hand as you would hardly venture, or even
wiſh to gainſay; I mean the authority of *John Weſley*,
M. A. who declares, in his expoſition of the New
Teſtament—" This is fully conſiſtent with our being
" juſtified by the imputation of the righteouſneſs of
" *CHRIST*." Now I ſhall only remonſtrate, in imi-
tation of the apoſtle; " If thou thyſelf uſeſt this
" phraſe, why wouldſt thou compel others to lay it
" aſide? Or, why art thou diſpleaſed with others,
" for a practice which thou alloweſt in thyſelf?"

Surely you will not ſay, *imputation* of righteouſneſs
is quite a different thing from *imputed* righteouſneſs.
—Does not the former evidently include the latter?
Can there be a proclamation of pardon, without a
pardon proclaimed? Can there be the purchaſe of
an eſtate, without an eſtate purchaſed; or the impu-
tation of righteouſneſs, without a righteouſneſs im-
puted? If others ſhould affect ſuch ſubtile and ſelf-
deluding evaſions, Mr *Weſley* cannot, Mr *Weſley muſt*
not, he has precluded himſelf; nay, he has, with his
own mouth, given a verdict againſt himſelf. Is it
not

* Both the cherubims were of one meaſure, and one ſize:
and their wings touched one another in the midſt of the houſe,
1 *Kings* vi. 25, 27.

not recorded in thoſe lines, ſubjoined to your character of a methodiſt ?

Let faith and love combine
To guard your valiant breaſt;
The plate be righteouſneſs divine,
Imputed and impreſt.

This *imputed righteouſneſs* was once a delightful theme; your ſong in the houſe of your pilgrimage. Why is it now a burthenſome ſtone, which you would fain ſhake off from yourſelf and others ? Are you become *rich* in yourſelf, and *increaſed with goods* of your own acquiring ? We know full well for what reaſon the *phraſe* and the *doctrine* are rejected, exploded, and reproached by the *Romiſh* ſuperſtition, becauſe they diſplay, in the brighteſt light, the beauty of FREE GRACE. They hold the door againſt all kind of human merit; they cut off every, the moſt diſtant pretenſion for glorying in man, and refer all the honour of ſalvation to *JESUS CHRIST* alone. Admit juſtification through the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and the grand bulwark, or the main pillar of *Popery*, falls to the ground ? while a ſolid foundation is laid for that triumph and gratitude, expreſſed in the inſpired hymn, *Let us be glad and rejoice* exceedingly, but *give the honour* (all the honour) *to HIM* *.

The righteouſneſs of GOD, ſignifies the righteouſneſs which GOD-man wrought out. "No;" ſays Mr *Weſley*. Your reaſon, Sir, for this negative ? A child may deny; a man of judgment will diſprove.—Does not Mr *Weſley* diſprove, when he adds ? "It "ſignifies GOD's method of juſtifying ſinners."—Juſt as forcibly as the "*Jews* diſproved the Meſſiah-"ſhip of *JESUS* of *Nazareth*, when they cried, "Thou the MESSIAH! No: thou art a *Samaritan*, "and haſt a devil." What they alledged wanted a proof, altogether as much as what they denied.—What

* Rev. xix. 7.

What Mr *Wesley* here alledges is a thread-bare objection, already considered, and already confuted. Yet, since it relates to a point of the utmost moment, and that which is the main hinge of our controversy, I shall not be deemed officious, if, as the shot has been once again discharged, I once again lift up my shield against it.

"The righteousness of GOD signifies GOD's "method of justifying sinners." We have already shewn how low an interpretation this is; how insipid in itself, and incompatible with the current language of scripture: on the other hand, how sublime and consolatory is the sense which *Aspasio* gives! A righteousness which GOD HIMSELF has provided without any co-operation from his creatures:—The righteousness of that most exalted, yet most condescending SAVIOUR, who is GOD and man in one *CHRIST;* a righteousness, dignified with all the perfections of the GODHEAD, therefore worthy to be the comfort, the joy, the never-ceasing boast of his people; and sufficient, infinitely sufficient, to save even the most vile, the most base, the most desperately ruined sinners.

This is a righteousness, as much superior to all human attainments, to all angelic accomplishments, as the heaven of heavens is higher than a clod of the valleys.—This is a righteousness which could never have entered into the heart of man or angels to conceive, but will be the cause of their admiration, and the subject of their wonder to endless ages.—This sense fully accounts for those rapturous expressions of the prophet, when speaking of the all-surpassing gift, he thus addresses his fellow-sinners; *Rejoice greatly, O daughter of Zion; shout, O daughter of Jerusalem; behold, thy King cometh unto thee;—he is righteous, and having salvation.* He is completely righteous in his nature, has fulfilled all righteousness in his life and death, and has thereby obtained for thee, a full par-

don, a finiſhed ſalvation, a ſure title to eternal glory. —This accounts for thoſe more rapturous expreſſions of the ſacred writers, when, in the fervour of their gratitude, they call upon the whole creation to celebrate the goodneſs of the incarnate JEHOVAH. *Sing, O ye heavens, for the LORD hath done it; ſhout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into ſinging, ye mountains; O foreſt, and every tree therein; for the LORD hath* (in his own perſon, by his own obedience and ſuffering) *redeemed Jacob, and glorified* (not human abilities, not human works but) *himſelf*, and his own righteouſneſs, *in* the reſtoration of *Iſrael* *.

In ſhort, this is a righteouſneſs, which exalts GOD's juſtice; which magnifies the law, diſplays all his awful and amiable attributes in their fulleſt luſtre.—To contrive it, was unſearchable wiſdom; to beſtow it, is invaluable treaſure.—It anſwers, in the completeſt manner, all the grand and gracious purpoſes both of GOD's glory and of man's ſalvation. True goſpel this! glad tidings indeed! an expedient for our recovery

* *Iſ.* xliv. 23. Should any one ſay, Is this the ſenſe of the prophet? I aſk, Is not this the fulleſt, grandeſt, divineſt ſenſe? Is it not a ſenſe perfectly true? Is it not warranted by the goſpel-revelation? Is it not demanded by that declaration of our SAVIOUR; *They* (the ancient ſcriptures) *teſtify of me?* Some writers, I am aware, interpret this and other ſimilar paſſages, without taking in the unſpeakable bleſſings of *CHRIST* and his grace. But theſe interpreters ſeem to act a very injudicious, and no leſs unfaithful part. I will ſuppoſe them expounding and illuſtrating that great command of creating power, *Let the earth bring forth graſs, and the herb yielding ſeed.*—Will they model their expoſition, or fetch their illuſtration from what appears on the ground in the barren month of *December?* Surely, if they have any taſte or judgment, they will form their comment, by the fertility, the plenty, the unbounded luxuriancy of *April* and *May*. There is much the ſame difference between the righteouſneſs of an incarnate SAVIOUR and all other gifts of divine goodneſs, as there is between the vegetable productions of the vernal, and the almoſt total ſterility of the wintry months.

very greater than our hearts could wish. We may truly say, while meditating on this gift of consummate righteousness; *Where sin has abounded, grace has much more abounded.* The bricks are fallen down, but the most glorious Repairer of our breaches has built with hewn stone. Well might the apostle, having this supremely-excellent righteousness in his view, look down with the most sovereign contempt upon every other (cause of) confidence; upon every other object of trust; and reckon them *dross* and *dung*.—Well might he declare that he would never be ashamed of the gospel, in which is this transcendently-noble righteousness, in all its magnificence, riches, and glory.

Do you think me rather too warm upon the subject? Let me once again remit you to St *Chrysostom;* read his exposition of that charming sentence, *The righteousness of GOD*, Θεου, &c. This venerable father of the church speaks the thing as it is. He does not mingle our wine with water, but gives us the genuine truth, and triumphs because of the truth.

The doctrine of an imputed righteousness seems to have been typically taught, by the remarkable manner of clothing our first parents. All they could do for their own recovery, was like the patched and beggarly mantle of fig-leaves; this they relinquish, and GOD himself furnishes them with apparel; animals are slain, not for food, but sacrifice; and the naked criminals are arrayed with the skins of those slaughtered beasts.—The *victims* figured the expiation made by *CHRIST*'s death, the *cloathing* typified the imputation of his righteousness. "That does not appear," cries Mr *Wesley*, *Aspasio* has produced an authority from the famous *Milton*. I could reinforce it by another from the elegant *Witsius*. If you are not satisfied with either, or both these testimonies, I will give you a reason for the sentiment.—The victims most properly shadowed forth the expiation of guilt, by the Re-

deemer's blood; becauſe it is the peculiar end of ſacrifice, to make atonement for ſins; the cloathing moſt pertinently denoted the Saviour's righteouſneſs, which is deſcribed, both by the prophet and the apoſtle under this very image—*He hath covered me with the robe of righteouſneſs*, ſays the prophet *Iſaiah*. *The fine linen*, which arrays the bride of the Lamb, *is the perfect righteouſneſs of the ſaints* *.—ſays the beloved diſciple. It is like a royal veſture, or a rich ſuit of apparel, *upon all them that believe*, adds the apoſtle *Paul*. The impartial reader, I promiſe myſelf, will allow theſe paſſages, if not to be abſolutely deciſive, yet to have ſomewhat more weight, than that atom in your ſcale. "This does not appear." As for ſanctification, this may very reaſonably rank among the effects of being cleanſed by the blood, and adorned with the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. Theſe bleſſings produce peace of conſcience, and love of GOD. Juſt as commodious cloathing produces warmth, and promotes health. And what is love of GOD, but holineſs of heart in the ſeed, and holineſs of life in the fruit?

As this (the nature of true holineſs) is a matter of the laſt importance; is a point, on which multitudes, I fear, are miſtaken; I will leave it uppermoſt in your thoughts, in the reader's, and in thoſe of, Rev. Sir, your, *&c.*

LET-

* *Rev.* xix. 8. Τα δικαιωματα, being in the plural number, I think may be tranſlated, *juſtitia omnibus numeris abſoluta.* A righteouſneſs of all kinds, and all degrees, or comprehending every kind, and defective in no degree.—Would you ſee the beauty of this fine linen, or the wardrobe in which it is depoſited, conſult, *Iſ.* xlv. 24. *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, vol. II. * pag. 68. *&c.* where the paſſage is explained, with copiouſneſs and particularity; O! that it was alſo explained with a propriety and energy ſuitable to its eminent importance!

* i. e. vol. III. in this edition.

LETTER X.

REV. SIR,

WE are now entering upon a new province. Our buſineſs will be chiefly of the *philological* kind. We ſhall treat principally of *words*. But as they are the words which the HOLY GHOST teacheth, they are like the combs erected in yonder hive. Not empty ſyllables, made only for ſound; but rich with divine ſenſe, and full of the honey of the goſpel, replete with the manna of heaven.—May this pen be, to the reader, like *Jonathan*'s rod, when, dipt in the delicious juice, it *enlightened his eyes*, refreſhed his ſpirits, and cheared his heart!

"Almoſt every text," you are pleaſed to affirm, "quoted in this and the following letter, in ſupport "of that particular form of expreſſion, (imputed righ-"teouſneſs,) is diſtorted above meaſure from the plain, "obvious meaning, which is pointed out by the con-"text."—Let us examine theſe abuſed and diſtorted texts, in order to diſcover, from whence the misfortune happened; how the violence was done; whether by Mr *Weſley*'s pen, or by *Aſpaſio*'s tongue.

The firſt is from the book of *Job*. Which, as it is greatly venerable for its antiquity, and ſingularly to be regarded for its importance, I ſhall beg leave to conſider at large.—A ſinner is deſcribed, lying under a dangerous ſickneſs; and brought, by the force of his diſeaſe, to the brink of the grave; by the multitude of his ſins, to the very borders of hell. In this deplorable condition, *If there be a meſſenger with him, an interpreter, one of a thouſand, to ſhew unto man his uprightneſs; then he is gracious unto him, and ſaith, Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ranſom* *.

If

* *Job* xxxiii. 23, 24. I have the rather choſen to lay this whole paſſage before the reader, becauſe a new interpretation is

If there be with him a meſſenger of the living GOD; a faithful ambaſſador of *CHRIST*, who may adminiſter ſpiritual aſſiſtance to the poor afflicted creature. —*An interpreter*, who knows how to open the ſcriptures, and rightly to divide the word of truth; who is a preacher of righteouſneſs, and can properly apply the word of grace.—This is not every one's talent; nor within the compaſs of every man's abilities. He is *one of a thouſand*, to whom GOD hath given the tongue of the learned; enabling him to ſpeak a word in ſeaſon, and ſuit the condition of each reſpective patient.—*To ſhew unto man his uprightneſs;* that is, ſays Mr *Weſley*, "to convince *him* of GOD's ju-"ſtice, in ſo puniſhing him."

But is this the inſtruction, which ſuch a diſtreſſed ſufferer wants? Is this the word of reconciliation, which every true miniſter, in ancient times, did preach, and in latter times does preach? Or is there any need of a choice inſtructor,—one ſkilled in the counſel of GOD, to teach what the common dictates of reaſon demonſtrate? —In this interpretation, I can neither diſcern the true critic, nor the clear reaſoner, nor the ſound divine.

Not the *true critic*. He would acknowledge, that the antecedent in this clauſe לאדם ישרו, is not GOD, but man. To *man* therefore, if we regard grammatical propriety, the pronoun *his* muſt be referred.—

Not

is given to the word *meſſenger*. Here, it is ſuppoſed to denote a faithful and ſkilful miniſter of the goſpel. In the dialogues it is ſuppoſed to deſcribe our *LORD JESUS CHRIST* himſelf. I ſcarcely know, which ſenſe to prefer. Perhaps, both may be included, the author, as well as the inſtrument, of comfort to the ſick and ſinful man.—However, the point in debate between Mr *Weſley* and *Aſpaſio*, is not affected by the different application of this word. *His uprightneſs*, according to either expoſition, *may* ſignify the MESSIAH's obedience and ſufferings; *muſt* ſignify theſe things; provided theſe are the only juſtifying righteouſneſs of a ſinner; the only way of obtaining the divine favour, and removing every evil.

Not the *clear reaſoner;* he would obſerve the emphaſis of the word *then* *. Implying ſome diſcovery, or ſome conviction, in conſequence of which, deliverance from death enſues, or with which it is connected Can this be a diſcovery or a conviction of GOD's juſtice, in puniſhing him? No verily.—Much leſs therefore can I diſcern the *ſound divine.* He knows, and affirms conſtantly, that this is the conſequence of the MESSIAH's righteouſneſs alone; which, being imputed to the ſinner, becomes, for the bleſſed purpoſe of juſtification unto life, *his* †.

So

* Verſe 24.

† "*The uprightneſs,*" ſays Mr *Caryl*, "chiefly intended "here, is *the righteouſneſs of CHRIST*, in and by which we "are reconciled to and made one with GOD. We never ſee "where our uprightneſs is, till we ſee there is nothing that "makes us ſtand upright in the court of heaven, but only "*CHRIST* our righteouſneſs.—This is the great duty of the "meſſengers and interpreters of *CHRIST*, to declare to man "this righteouſneſs for his uprightneſs. And that hence it is "(as *Elihu* ſpeaks) that GOD is and will be gracious unto "him."

Mr *Caryl*, in expounding the book of *Job*, has acquitted himſelf like a maſter in *Iſrael.* His thoughts are beautiful and animated. His criticiſms are correct and judicious. His language, conſidering the time in which he wrote, is remarkably pure and ſtrong. His doctrines are truly edifying, becauſe, generally ſpeaking, they are evangelical.—What is a very neceſſary, but very difficult taſk, in explaining this part of ſcripture, the connection of the ſentiment is diſcovered, the bearings and dependencies of the argument are pointed out; and the tranſitions from one paſſage to another, ſhewn to be, not wild and diſorderly, but juſt, regular and graceful.

The only fault attending this work, is prolixity. I wiſh ſome ſkilful hand would, by rendering it leſs copious, render it more uſeful. I cannot but think, it might be a profitable employ for young ſtudents in divinity, to exerciſe themſelves in abridging Mr *Caryl*, Dr *Owen* upon the *Hebrews*, Mr *Charnock* upon the attributes, or ſome ſuch valuable, but voluminous authors. Theſe, and many other works of the ſame luxuriant growth, would, if put into the alembic, afford us the very ſpirit of the goſpel, and the richeſt cordials for our ſouls.

So that *Aſpaſio* ſeems to have the import of language, and the ſcope of the context, both on his ſide. And I may venture to add, he has the conſolatory genius of the goſpel, yet more ſtrongly pleading for his interpretation. It muſt yield but cold comfort, to tell a poor wretch, confined to the bed of languiſhing, and alarmed with apprehenſions of eternal vengeance; but cold comfort muſt it yield, to tell ſuch a one, that he has deſerved all this miſery, and is juſtly puniſhed. Whereas, to inform him of a righteouſneſs, ſufficient to do away all his tranſgreſſions; ſufficient to reconcile him, and render him acceptable, even to the chaſtiſing GOD; ſufficient to obtain his deliverance, very probably from death, moſt aſſuredly from hell; this is a reviving report indeed. This will make the bones, which ſin and miſery had broken, to rejoice.

Then, the ſinner and the ſufferer, attentive to this inſtruction, and applying this righteouſneſs, is made partaker of pardon. GOD, the ſovereign LORD of life and death, *is gracious unto him; and ſaith*, in the greatneſs of his ſtrength, as well as in the multitude of his mercies, *Deliver him from going down into the pit* of corruption, as a pledge of his deliverance from the pit of perdition. For *I have found a ranſom*, ſatisfactory to my law, and to my juſtice. I have received an atonement, in behalf of this once obnoxious, now reconciled tranſgreſſor.

He ſhall receive the bleſſing from the LORD, and righteouſneſs.—This you will render *holineſs*. But have you no *Hebrew* lexicon to inform you, that the word which ſignifies holineſs, is very different from the expreſſion uſed by the Pſalmiſt? He ſays צדקה, whereas holineſs is expreſſed by קדש. Beſides, have you not obſerved, that *your* interpretation would betray the Pſalmiſt into apparent tautology? He had, in the preceding verſes, diſplayed the duties of practical godlineſs, and the graces of inherent holineſs. The perſon

perſon he deſcribes, poſſeſſes the latter, and practiſes the former. To ſay, therefore, he ſhall receive holineſs, when he has it already, would not ſuit *David*'s correctneſs; however it may ſuit Mr *Weſley*'s fancy, or Mr *Weſley*'s deſign.—In this clauſe, the evangelical moraliſt touches upon another particular, which enters, as an eſſential part, into the character of a godly man; even *the righteouſneſs which is of faith;* denoted by the bleſſing of pardon, and the gift of righteouſneſs. Take away this, and there is no acceptance with GOD. Take away this, and the gates, mentioned in the cloſe of the pſalm, are unalterably ſhut. Unleſs we are furniſhed with this paſſport, the everlaſting doors never lift up their heads.—If you exclude this peculiarity, the deſcription is very imperfect, and the picture extremely deficient. Whereas, this adds the finiſhing touch, and gives *true* perfection to both.

Several paſſages are quoted, in which the word צדקה occurs. Sometimes you would have it ſignify *mercy;* ſometimes *juſtification;* ſometimes *ſpotleſs holineſs*. But what proof do I find, for eſtabliſhing any of theſe ſignifications; which differ ſo much from one another, and ſtill more from the truth? Nothing but the cuſtomary argument, "So it unqueſtionably "means."—Now you muſt unqueſtionably know, at leaſt every novice in the language knows, that the genuine and native ſenſe of צדקה is *righteouſneſs*. The word expreſſive of mercy, is רחמ; neither in ſenſe nor ſound alike.—As to *juſtification*, the phraſe never denotes that bleſſed effect, but the divine and meritorious cauſe which produces it.

Shall I, in this inquiry, appeal to the beſt lexicons, the moſt approved tranſlations, or the ableſt interpreters? No, I will refer you to the deciſion of an interpreter, who is ſuperior to all lexicons and all tranſlations; I mean, the author of the epiſtle to the *Hebrews*. He tranſlates this very word, as it enters into the name of *Melchiſedec*. And he tranſlates it,

not mercy, not juſtification, no, nor ſpotleſs holineſs, but righteouſneſs; even that righteouſneſs, whoſe fruit is peace with GOD, and peace in our own conſcience. Now, will you play the critic upon this inſpired writer? and ſay, Unqueſtionably it means, not what the apoſtle has determined; not what *Aſpaſio*, ſupported by his authority, has adopted; but what I think fit to dictate?

An oppoſer of our LORD's imputed righteouſneſs, who had more diſcretion or more ſubtilty than Mr *Weſley*, would have argued in this manner: "The "original word, I muſt confeſs, ought to be tranſla- "ted *righteouſneſs*. This is undoubtedly the princi- "pal and leading ſignification of the term. But then "the circumſtances and the context oblige us to un- "derſtand it, in the notion of mercy, of ſpotleſs ho- "lineſs, or of any thing elſe that ſerves our purpoſe." —This would be more modeſt and more plauſible, tho' not more juſt and ſolid, than your confident aſſertion.

Suppoſe we ſhould admit this pretence, what does the critic gain thereby? Muſt he not have recourſe to that noble and comfortable doctrine, for which we plead? Let the word be tranſlated *mercy*. Why is mercy ſhewn to ſinners? Is it not on account of the righteouſneſs of their SURETY? Let it be tranſlated *goodneſs*. Wherefore is goodneſs exerciſed to rebellious men? Is it not becauſe of the ſatisfaction made by their crucified LORD? Render it whatever you pleaſe, provided it conveys the idea of favour vouchſafed, or of the benefits conferred, it muſt terminate, ſtill terminate, in that grand central point, the incarnation, obedience, and death of IMMANUEL.

Zion ſhall be redeemed with judgment—"After ſevere "puniſhment," you ſay,—The *Hebrew* prepoſition, ſignifying *after*, is אחר. I find no trace of any ſuch word in my edition of the Bible. You may as well render or interpret the paſſage, *in the midſt*. And then, if ſome other critic ſhould be inclined to tranſ-

late

late it, *before* or *round about;* we ſhould have a large compaſs of meaning; but where would preciſion and exactneſs be found?—But why is *Zion* to be redeemed *after* ſevere puniſhment? Has her puniſhment any influence or ſway in the work of her redemption? Does the puniſhment of man pave the way for the ſalvation of GOD? Are ſinners to wait for pardon and reconciliation, till they have been ſeverely puniſhed? This is very diſcouraging doctrine; and, bleſſed be GOD, it is abſolutely without foundation. The goſpel ſays, *To-day, even to-day*, ſinners, *if ye will hear his voice, ye ſhall enter into reſt.* You need not tarry till you have been ſeverely chaſtiſed; but this inſtant believe in the *LORD JESUS*, and you ſhall be ſaved. The *LORD JESUS* has been wounded and bruiſed in your ſtead. He has received all the puniſhment which you have deſerved. Yea, as a ranſomer, he has paid double, as a victim, he has ſuffered double *, for all your ſins.—Conſidering theſe things, I am ſtill diſpoſed to abide by *Aſpaſio*'s plain and obvious interpretation; not to go out of my way, in queſt of the pricking brier and grieving thorn, when I meet with roſes and lilies in the common road.

In the LORD have I righteouſneſs. This will not ſatisfy our critic. It muſt be *through* the LORD.—What piddling criticiſm is this, even in caſe it was true, and anſwered ſome ſpecious end! But it is by no means true. Every body knows, that the prefix ב ſignifies *in;* and every body but Mr *Weſley* would bluſh to aſſert the contrary. Neither does it anſwer any valuable end, but the reverſe. It degrades the exalted ſenſe, and impoveriſhes the rich bleſſing. To have righteouſneſs *in* the LORD, is abundantly more expreſſive of glorious grace, than barely to have righteouſneſs *through* the LORD. *Mordecai* had riches and honours *thro' Ahaſuerus*, and his royal favour; *Eſther* had riches and honours *in Ahaſuerus*, as her

* Iſ. xl. 2.

royal husband; *he* by being a courtier, *she* by being a consort to the most magnificent monarch in the world.

If Mr *Wesley* piddled in the foregoing, he flashes in the following passage. He assures us that קדש עלמים means *spotless holiness*. This is really a bold stroke in criticism. But, like many other bold enterprises, it is likely to prove, not a birth, but an abortion.—עלמים *spotless!* You might as well have rendered it *toothless*. It has no more to do with the idea of spotless, than it has to do with the idea of an ivory tooth, or a polished tooth-pick. Literally translated, it signifies *ages;* and may denote the *perpetuity* of this righteousness, and of its beneficial effects. It *was* from the beginning, it *is* at this day, and it *will be* even unto the end, mighty to save. It is the one refuge and hope of sinners, in every age of the world, and under every dispensation of religion. Thro' all the changes of time it has been, and thro' the unchangeable eternity it will be their chief joy, and their crown of rejoicing.

What righteousness shall give us peace at the last day, inherent or imputed? To this question *Aspasio* has replied, in a very explicit manner, by presenting us with a pertinent extract from *Bishop Hall*, and by commenting upon a most important prophecy of *Isaiah*. In both which, all human righteousness is set aside, and our peace is derived entirely from the glorious SHILOH *; from him, who made peace by the blood of his cross, and whose name is THE PRINCE OF PEACE; having this heavenly blessing, and the right of conferring it, as the peculiar privilege, or unshared prerogative of his crown.

Mr *Wesley* is pleased to deny this doctrine, and to associate

* *Gen.* xlix. 10. שילה *Schilo. Nomen Messiæ peculiare, tranquillatorem designans.* That is, the maker of peace, and the author of tranquillity, for rebellious and wretched men.

associate with the Papists *, in ascribing our peace (and if our peace, then our salvation) "partly to in-"herent, partly to imputed righteousness."—But does our church so? Hear her own words. "We do "not presume to come to this thy table, O merciful "LORD, trusting in our own righteousnes;" much less then will she dare to approach his judgment-seat, trusting in any such thing.—Does the apostle *Paul* do so? Hear his own protestation, *That I may be found in CHRIST, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law;* which consists of my personal obedience, and inherent holiness; but having this, as the source of my peace, and the strength of my salvation, *the righteousness which is of GOD by faith*; even that inconceivably precious righteousness, which GOD my SAVIOUR wrought, and which a sinner by faith receives.—Did Mr *Wesley* himself always do so? Let those lines bear witness; of which neither the poet nor the divine need be ashamed.

My righteous servant, and my SON,
Shall each believing sinner clear;
And all who stoop t'abjure their own,
Shall in his righteousness appear.

Will that righteousness give you peace, which you *abjure?* Or, is it pious, is it prudent, is it consistent, to trust in a righteousness, which you absolutely renounce? That which you abjure (a stronger word could not be used) you consider, not barely, as despicable, but as utterly abominable. Whereas, that which gives you peace at the awful tribunal, must not

* The doctrine of the Papists, avowed by a writer of their own, is; "Our confidence and hope in the day of judgment "dependeth, not only upon our apprehension of *CHRIST*'s "merits by faith, but also upon our conformity to *CHRIST*, "in charity and good works."—The reader may see this presumption rebuked, and this error refuted, in Dr FULK's *annotations on the Rhemish Testament.* 1 John iv. 17.

not only be excellent, but incomparably excellent and valuable.—See, my friend, how *thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I: yea, thine own lips teſtify againſt thee* *. O! that you may return to your firſt ſentiments, and to your firſt love †! and no longer expoſe yourſelf and your doctrine to be a by-word among the people. If you perſiſt in ſuch palpable inconſiſtencies, who can forbear taking up that taunting proverb, *A double-minded man is unſtable in all his ways?*

But

* Job xv. 6.

† That Mr *Weſley* may not be aſhamed to retract a miſtaken ſentiment, I will break the ice, and lead the way. If it be ſhameful to renounce error, and ſacrifice all to truth, I do very willingly take this ſhame to myſelf.—In a copy of verſes, which I formerly wrote, ſacred to the memory of a generous benefactor, I remember the following lines:

Our wants reliev'd by thy indulgent care,
Shall give thee courage at the dreadful bar.
And ſtud the crown thou ſhalt for ever wear.

Theſe lines, in whatever hands they are lodged, and whatever elſe, of a like kind, may have dropt from my pen, I now publicly diſclaim. They are the very reverſe of my preſent belief. In which I hope to perſevere, ſo long as I have any being.

Far be it from me to ſuppoſe, that any work of mine ſhould, in order to create my peace, or cheriſh my confidence, *be coupled with CHRIST's moſt holy act.* I ſpeak the words of our church, and I ſpeak the ſenſe of the prophet. *I will truſt, and not be afraid.* Wherefore? Becauſe I am inherently holy? Rather, *becauſe GOD is my ſalvation.* GOD manifeſt in the fleſh, has finiſhed my tranſgreſſion, and made an end of my ſin. And in this moſt magnificently-gracious work will I rejoice. I ſpeak agreeably to the declaration of the HOLY GHOST. *Fear not, for thou ſhalt not be aſhamed, neither ſhalt thou be confounded.* Why? becauſe thy inherent goodneſs ſhall prevent thy confuſion? No; but on a footing, infinitely more ſolid; for a reaſon, infinitely more ſatisfactory. *Becauſe thy MAKER is thy huſband.* The conſequence of which is, all thy debts and deficiencies are upon him; all his conſummate righteouſneſs is upon thee.

But ſtop. A paſſage from St *John* is introduced, to ſupport this opinion. "*CHRIST* died for us, "and lives in us, *that we may have boldneſs in the* "*day of judgment.*"—That *CHRIST* died for us, and lives in us, I readily acknowledge: but where do you find any of the apoſtles, from theſe premiſes, drawing *your* concluſion? St *John*, whom you quote, has no ſuch logic. His inference is deduced from a very different topic. You give us a fragment of the apoſtle's words; why don't you exhibit the golden bowl complete? We ſhall then quickly perceive, that it contains a more ſweet and ſalutary draught, than you have provided for our refreſhment.

Εν τουτω τετελειωται η αγαπη μεθ' ημων, ινα παρρησιαν εχωμεν εν τη ημερα κρισεως. Which we tranſlate, *Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldneſs in the day of judgment* *. As you are fond of criticiſing upon the original ſcriptures, here you might have done it juſtly and honourably. Here you might have altered and reformed our tranſlation; while every capable judge would have owned your ſervice to be ſeaſonable and important. The true ſenſe of μεθ' ημων is *with us*, or *with regard to us*. That is, GOD's love, celebrated with inimitable † energy and beauty in the preceding verſe; GOD's love towards us is herein made perfect; this is its grand and crowning effect, that we ſhould have, not a bare hope, but an unappalled boldneſs at the day of judgment.

As

* 1 John iv. 17.

† Ο Θεος αγαπη εστιν, *God is love.* This I call *inimitable.* Nothing can be more ſimple, yet nothing is more ſublime. For my part, I know not how to attempt an illuſtration of the noble ſentiment. It ſtrikes the mind, as light ſtrikes the eye. No art can make *this* more bright; and no paraphraſe can make *that* more delicate, more majeſtic, more affecting.—How flat ſome of the fineſt things ſaid by the ancient philoſophers; how flat they read, when compared with this animated ſtroke of divine eloquence, the reader, if he pleaſes, may ſee, in CONTEMPLATIONS ON THE STARRY HEAVENS.

As though he had said, GOD having reconciled us to himself, by the blood of his SON;—having renewed us after his own image, by his blessed SPIRIT, testifying of *CHRIST* in our hearts;—having carried us through all the dangers of life, and raised our bodies from the dust of death; he crowns and consummates all these most indulgent acts of his grace, by giving us an undaunted and triumphant confidence, at the day of universal audit. According to this interpretation, your own text is against your opinion; and refers this joyful assurance, not to our love of GOD, but to his love of us; not to inherent righteousness, but to free grace *.

Aspasio thus translates St *Peter's* words; *Who have obtained like precious faith in the righteousness of our GOD and our SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST* †. Mr *Wesley* gives us to understand, that this translation is wrong. It should be faith *through*—and not through the righteousness, but through the *mercy* of our GOD and SAVIOUR.—He will not allow the *Greek* preposition εν to signify *in*; though I can prove it to have been in peaceable possession of this signification, for more than two thousand years. And the substantive δικαιοσυνη must not denote *righteousness*, though it pleads, as a warrant for this weighty sense, the incontestible authority of St *Paul*. Give me leave to tell you, Sir, that I can produce a multitude of proofs, to overthrow your first puny alteration; but produce, if you can, a single passage from the whole New Testament

* Should it be said, in case you thus interpret the first part of the text, how will it connect with what follows? Perfectly well.—And none need wonder, that we shall appear with such boldness at his coming: since they cannot but observe, that *as he is, so are we in this world.* We are actuated by his SPIRIT; we resemble him in all our conversation; and hence it is evident, that we are one with him.

† 2 *Pet.* i. 1. Τοις ισοτιμον ημιν λαχουσι πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη του Θεου ημων και σωτηρος ημων Ιησου Χριστου.

Teſtament *, to uphold your laſt daring innovation.

Here I cannot but obſerve, you abandon your favourite commentator *Bengelius;* of whoſe merit and excellence you ſpeak ſo highly and ſo juſtly. He ſays, in his notes upon the place, The righteouſneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR, is the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST;* which faith apprehends, and which is oppoſed to a man's own righteouſneſs.—What is more ſurpriſing, you depart from your own comment; nay, you expreſsly contradict your own comment. To edify the readers of your expoſition, you inform and aſſure them, that this phraſe ſignifies "both the active "and paſſive righteouſneſs" of *CHRIST*. To gainſay what *Aſpaſio* has advanced, you more than inſinuate, that it ſignifies no ſuch thing, but only "the "mercy of our LORD,"—Nay, to corroborate the true ſenſe, and determine the words invariably to the active and paſſive righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, you add, "It is this alone by which the juſtice of GOD is ſa-"tisfied." If then Mr *Weſley* would reconcile what he writes in his expoſitory notes, with what he writes in his animadverſions on *Aſpaſio*, he muſt maintain, that by the *mercy* of GOD alone, his juſtice is ſatisfied.

I will not exclaim, on this occaſion, as you have too freely and not very genteelly done, in your letter to Mr *Law*, "Exquiſite nonſenſe †!" But this I may venture

* *The righteouſneſs of GOD, the righteouſneſs of GOD our SAVIOUR*, never denotes, in all the apoſtolical writings, the attribute of *mercy*. If it does, and Mr *Weſley* can make it appear, I will confeſs myſelf miſtaken, and thank him for correcting my error.

† Mr *Weſley*, in the *abridgment* of his letter to Mr *Law*, inſerted in the *Preſervative from unſettled notions*, has expunged this and ſome other indecently-harſh expreſſions. In ſo doing, he has done well. Since the *contemptuous* and the *reproachful*, even when really deſerved, can have no tendency to confirm our argument, but to provoke reſentment. They

venture to say, Contradiction, didst thou ever know so trusty a friend, or so faithful a devotee? Many people are ready enough to contradict others. But it seems all one to this gentleman, whether it be another or himself, so he may but contradict.

Permit me, for a moment, seriously to expostulate the case. Why should you be so averse to the righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR? Why should you ransack all the stores of your learning and knowledge; nay, descend to unwarrantable criticisms, and quite unworthy your superior abilities, in order to exclude this most glorious truth from the Bible? in order to exterminate this most precious privilege from the church? Attempt, if you think proper, to pluck the sun from the firmament, to hide the light from our eyes, and withdraw the air from our lungs. But do not attempt to rob us of what is far more valuable than all these blessings, by depriving us of this inestimable treasure, the righteousness of *CHRIST*.—Which, being a righteousness immaculate, all-surpassing, divine, swallows up and annihilates our guilt; as the immense waves of the ocean would swallow up and annihilate the drop of ink, that now hangs on the point of my pen.—Which, being a righteousness immaculate, all-surpassing, divine, will present us before our GOD, and before his angels, without spot and blemish; in robes more beautiful than the colours of that resplendent bow, which is bended on the skirts of yonder cloud.

Therein *is revealed the righteousness of GOD;*—"GOD's method of justifying sinners." See this interpretation examined, and this objection answered before.

We establish the law, as we expect no salvation, without

are not the most promising means of joining us together, in the same mind and the same judgment; but rather the sure way, to widen the breach, and increase animosity.

without a perfect conformity to it *,—namely, by *CHRIST*. "Is not this a mere quibble?" says Mr *Wesley*.—Quite the reverse. It is no *low conceit*, but an exceeding serious and momentous truth. It is no *play upon the sound* of words, but expresses a doctrine of great solidity, and of the last importance. Tell me, ye that cavil at this method of establishing the law, by what other expedient you propose to effect it?—By your past conduct? That, you must acknowledge, has been more or less a violation of the law.—By the present obedience? That, you cannot deny, falls short of the sublime requirements of the law.—By your future behaviour? Well, I will suppose, that, in some future period, you reach the very summit of perfection. Still the law will have much to complain of, and will lay much to your charge. You have not magnified it by a holy nature. You have not presented it with the consummate righteousness of your whole heart, and your whole conversation. You have not begun, from the first moment of your existence, and persevered in this perfect conformity, to the last breath you drew. In this case, either the law must recede from its most righteous demands, and the immutable GOD must compromise matters with his creatures, or else you can never enter into life. *Unless* you renounce all such impotent attempts, and arrogant conceits; talk no more of "practising it, in "its full extent," but betake yourself to *CHRIST*, *who is the end of the law* †, *for* accomplishing that *righ-*

* The reader is desired to peruse *Aspasio*'s own words, vol. III. pag. 92, 93. There his sentiments are more fully explained; but the passage is not transcribed, on purpose to avoid increasing the size of this piece; which already swells to a larger bulk than the writer proposed.

† *Rom.* x. 8. *CHRISTUS*, saith, *Bengelius*, *est* τελος νομου, *justitiam et vitam, quam lex ostendit, sed dare nequit, tribuens.* *CHRIST* is the end of the law. How? By bringing in that

 righteousness

righteouſneſs, which its precepts demand, but which the frailty of man cannot perform.

Thus we eſtabliſh the law, as the conſummate ſtandard of righteouſneſs; as the original condition of life; and as that moſt venerable ſyſtem, with which, as well as with its divine Author, there is no variableneſs or ſhadow of changing.—And does this method of ſecuring the dignity of the law, hinder or diſcourage a dutiful obſervance of its commands? If not, your objection derived from that well-known text, *Without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the* LORD, is

— — *telum imbelle ſine ictu.*

If this be the moſt rational, and the moſt ſure way of producing the love of GOD, which is the very eſſence of true holineſs, then your objection recoils, and falls upon the head of your own cauſe.—Can there be a more powerful, a more endearing motive to love the LORD my GOD, than a perſuaſion of his ineffable love to me, in giving his dear SON, ſo to fulfil, ſo to ſatisfy the law on my behalf, that I am thereby delivered from all my offences; am veſted with a perfect righteouſneſs; and on the foot of juſtice, as well as mercy, ſtand entitled to eternal life?

"Though I believe, that *CHRIST* hath *lived* and "*died* for me, yet I would ſpeak very tenderly and "ſparingly of the former."—How widely then does your practice differ from the apoſtle's? *We believe, and therefore have ſpoken*, confidently and inceſſantly, in ſeaſon, and out of ſeaſon. No, ſays Mr *Weſley*, "We

righteouſneſs, and giving that life, which the law ſhews, and ſhews the want of, but neither itſelf gives, nor can enable us to acquire.

CHRISTUS, ſaith St *Auguſtine*, *eſt legis finis, interficiens et perficiens.* The ceremonial law he has ſlain, and taken out of the way. The moral law he has fulfilled for us, and we in him. Inaſmuch as, through faith in his name, his obedience becometh ours.

"We believe, and therefore we ſpeak tenderly and "ſparingly."—If you believe, that *CHRIST* has lived for you, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs in your ſtead, ſurely you ſhould give him the honour of this wonderful loving-kindneſs, and both preach, and talk, and ſing of his goodneſs. It ſhould be as a fire ſhut up in your bones; and you ſhould ſpeak, that yourſelf may be refreſhed, and your LORD may be glorified.

But you "fear dreadful conſequences:" What! where the divine holineſs fears none; and the divine preſcience ſees none? Are you then more deep-ſighted, to diſcern theſe diſtant evils, than omniſcience? Methinks, I would not have ſpoken thus, unleſs I had been wiſer than the SPIRIT of inſpiration.—Do you not, by cheriſhing and avowing ſuch apprehenſions, find fault with the glorious goſpel, in which this righteouſneſs is revealed? revealed, as its moſt eminent article, and moſt diſtinguiſhing peculiarity? —A doctrine taught, and a bleſſing granted, and both from heaven! yet not fit to be diſplayed, inculcated, and inſiſted on! What a contemptible idea muſt this give of our holy religion, and of our holy revelation, to an inquiring infidel?

"I would never ſpeak of them (the active and paſ-"ſive righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*) ſeparately."—This inſinuates, what *Aſpaſio* diſavows; and what you cannot hint, without apparent injuſtice to his ſentiments. —"I would ſpeak of it (the former) as ſparingly as "do the ſcriptures." Here you appeal to thoſe writings, which muſt either condemn your conduct, or their own propriety. At your leiſure conſider the caſe, and you will find the dilemma unavoidable.—In the mean time, be ſo candid as to read a ſhort note, inſerted in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, vol. III. pag. 115; where you may ſee, that the ſcriptures are far from ſpeaking ſparingly on this point. It is their favourite

and

and fundamental topic. It runs through them, as a golden woof through a warp of ſilver; or as the vital blood through the animal ſtructure.—And whatever *you*, Sir, may be inclined to do, I hope no lover of *CHRIST* will be perſuaded to ſecrete this invaluable truth of the goſpel. Shall *ſuch* a truth ſkulk in a corner, or ſpeak only in a whiſper? No; let us proclaim it upon the houſe-tops; and wiſh, that the joyful ſound may reach the very ends of the earth.

The gift of righteouſneſs muſt ſignify a righteouſneſs not their own.—*Aſpaſio*'s expreſſion is, not *originally* their own. Originally he ſaid, with a view of hinting, that, in ſome other ſenſe, it was and is their own; their own, by way of imputation, though not by way of operation. This word, in order to make the ſentence appear abſurd, Mr *Weſley* drops. But whether ſuch a practice be free from guile, or what the apoſtle calls *cunning craftineſs*, let the impartial reader judge.

Aſpaſio's interpretation of the phraſe, authenticated by the language of ſcripture, Mr *Weſley* ſets aſide; and introduces another, whoſe only recommendation to the public is, "I come from *Weſley*'s pen."—Do you ſo? then we will allow you all proper regard. But becauſe you come from Mr *Weſley*'s pen, muſt you therefore diſplace propriety, and ſupplant truth? make an inſpired writer argue incorrectly, nay, jar with himſelf? This is rather too much for you to aſſume, even though you came recommended by a greater name.

"The gift of righteouſneſs, ſignifies the righteouſ-"neſs or holineſs which GOD gives to and works "in them." Let us obſerve the apoſtle's aim, and the proceſs of his reaſoning.—His aim is to illuſtrate the manner of our juſtification. For this purpoſe, he forms a contraſt between *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, and *CHRIST*'s obedience. *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, which he himſelf committed, ruins all that ſpring from him.

This

This is the leading propoſition, Now, if the ſacred diſputant knows how to reaſon accurately, or to draw a concluſion juſtly, the concluſion muſt be to this effect; ſo likewiſe *CHRIST*'s obedience which he himſelf performed, recovers all who believe in him. Through *Adam*'s diſobedience, without the conſideration of their own miſdoings, the former are made ſinners; through *CHRIST*'s obedience, without the conſideration of their own good qualities, the latter are made righteous.—Though I am far, very far from diſeſteeming the holineſs wrought in us, yet what place has it here? In the article of juſtification it is utterly excluded. It has no ſhare in the accompliſhment of that great work; and every attentive reader will ſee, that it enters not into the apoſtle's preſent argumentation.—Beſides, if the gift of righteouſneſs ſignifies the holineſs wrought in us, then we ſhall reign in life, by means of a perſonal, not of an imputed righteouſneſs, by means of an imperfect, not of a complete obedience.—Then all the people of GOD will be juſtified, not by the obedience of ONE, but each by his own, ſeverally and diſtinctly. Which is contrary, not only to a ſingle, but to many expreſs paſſages of this very chapter.

I ſaid, "Every attentive reader will ſee."—Some perhaps may ſay within themſelves, Is not this ſpoken in Mr *Weſley*'s manner? the looſe preſumptive way of arguing, which you blame in him?—To which it is anſwered, I am far from reſting my point upon this preſumptive proof: it is not the pillar which ſupports my cauſe; but only a feſtoon which adorns my pillar.—However, was it accompanied with no proofs ſatisfactory to others; it muſt to Mr *Weſley*, whom I ſuppoſe one of the attentive readers, have the force of demonſtration. Hear his own words, in his comment on this very portion of ſcripture: "As the ſin of *A-*
"*dam*, without the ſins which we afterwards com-
"mitted, brought us death; ſo the righteouſneſs of
"*CHRIST*,

"*CHRIST*, without the good works which we af-
"terwards perform, brings us life *."—It is a righ-
teouſneſs without the good works which we after-
wards perform; therefore it is a righteouſneſs, not o-
riginally our own, but another's. It is not that which
GOD works in us, but prior to it, and independent
on it. If *Aſpaſio* had ſuborned an evidence, and put
words into his mouth, he could not have deviſed a
more direct and full confirmation of his doctrine,
than this volunteer witneſs depoſeth.—I thank you,
Sir, for giving me ſo valuable an explanation of the
gift of righteouſneſs, and its bleſſed effects. I thank
you likewiſe for furniſhing *Aſpaſio* with ſo inconteſt-
able a vindication againſt the objections of the author
of *The Peſervative*.

The obedience of ONE, ſo highly extolled by the
apoſtle, is *CHRIST*'s actual performance of the
whole law.—This you deny. I wiſh you had favour-
ed me with your reaſons for this denial; but my wiſh-
es of this kind are conſtantly diſappointed. However,
I will follow our LORD's direction, and do unto o-
thers, even as I would they ſhould do unto me. I
will give you a reaſon for my own or *Aſpaſio*'s inter-
pretation.—The apoſtle is treating of *Adam*'s actual
breach of the law. If ſo, the proper antitheſis muſt
be *CHRIST*'s actual performance of the law.—In
the following verſes he explains himſelf. Let *them* be
the comment on our text, and the gift of righteouſ-
neſs means, *the righteouſneſs of ONE; the obedience
of ONE*. This righteouſneſs we have in *JESUS
CHRIST* our LORD; all other is inherent in our-
ſelves. Juſtification by this righteouſneſs, is alone
conſiſtent with free grace; juſtification by any other,
is (inconſiſtent with it, is) ſubverſive of it.

Farther, as you are a critic in the *Greek*, you need
not

* Here Mr *Weſley* ſpeaks in perfect agreement with *St Chryſoſtom*; ὁ Χριστὸς τοῖς ἐξ ἀνίν, καίτοιγε ἃ δικαιοπραγήσασι, γέγονε πρόξενος τῆς δικαιοσύνης.

not be informed, that St *Paul* uſes three ſeveral words, δικαιωμα, δικαιοσυνη, υπακοη. Now can you ſhew any paſſages, in which all theſe words are uſed to ſignify ſufferings or death? Nay, can you ſhew me any ſingle paſſage, in which any one of them occurs in this ſignification? If you cannot, what ſhadow of authority have you, for putting this conſtruction upon the words, in the preſent caſe? What ſhadow of authority for ſaying, with that unlimited confidence, *CHRIST*'s "dying for man, is *certainly* the *chief* part, if not the "*whole* which is meant by that expreſſion *?"—If you attend to the tenor of the apoſtle's argument, or inquire into the import of his language, perhaps you will ſee cauſe, not only to alter, but even to reverſe, this your poſitive aſſertion.

Let me ſubjoin an extract from St *Chryſoſtom*, ſuited to this and the preceding paragraph; and worthy of our ſerious conſideration. From which it will appear, that *Aſpaſio* is by no means ſingular in his ſentiments, but ſpeaks the doctrine of the ancient church.

Τυτ@ εστιν Ιησυ Χριστυ ο Αδαμ· πως τυπ@, φησιν; ὁλι ωσπερ εκεινῳ τοις εξ αυλυ, καιλοιγε μη φαγυσιν απο τυ ξυλυ, γεγονεν αιλι@ θαναλυ τυ δια την Βρωσιν εισαχθενλ@, ὡλω ϗ ο Χριστ@ τοις εξ ωυλυ, καιλοιγε κ δικαιοπραγησασι, γεγονε προξενος † δικαιοσυνης, ην δια τυ σαυρυ σασιν ημιν εχαρισαλο· δια τυλο ανω ϗ καλω τυ ΕΝΟΣ εχελαι, ϗ συνεχυσ τυλο εις μεσον φερει λεγων, Ωσπερ δι' ΕΝΟΣ ανθρωπυ η αμαρλια εις τον κοσμον εισηλθε· ϗ εν τω τυ ΕΝΟΣ παραπλωμαλι οι πολλοι απεθανον· ϗ'

* The obedience of one, St *Chryſoſtom* expounds by, ενος καλορθωσανλος. Would Mr *Weſley* venture to affirm, that *dying well*, not *doing well*, is *certainly* the chief thing ſignified in καλορθωσανλος? A pretty daring criticiſm this! Does not the word rather ſignify, a courſe of well-doing; terminated (if you pleaſe) in, not conſtituted by, a correſpondent death?

† προξενος, an expreſſive word; it ſeems to denote ſuch a procuring of righteouſneſs for ſinners, as correſponds with the proviſion made, by ſome hoſpitable houſeholder, for the ſtrangers who are come to be his gueſts. In which they bear no part, either of the expence, or of the trouble. προξενω σοι τυλο, *Hujus rei ſum tibi auctor; hanc rem tibi comparo.* Steph. Theſaur. in voc.

ϗ, Ουχ ως δι' ΕΝΟΣ αμαρτησαντος, το δωρημα· ϗ. Το κριμα εξ ΕΝΟΣ εις κατα κριμα ϗ παλιν, Ει γαρ τω τȣ ΕΝΟΣ παραπτωματι ο θανατος εβασιλευσε δια τȣ ενος· ϗ, Αρα ȣν ως δι' ΕΝΟΣ παραπτωματος· ϗ παλιν, Ωσπερ δια της παρακοης τȣ ΕΝΟΣ ανθρωπȣ αμαρτωλοι κατεσταθησαν οι πολλοι· ϗ ȣκ αρισταται τȣ ΕΝΟΣ, ιν' οταν λεγη σοι ο Ιȣδαιος, πως, ενος κατορθωσαντος τȣ Χριστȣ, η οικȣμενη εσωθη; δυνηθης αυτω λεγειν, πως, ενος παρακȣσαντος τȣ Αδαμ, η οικȣμενη κατεκριθη *.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us. That is, by our representative, and in our nature.—" Amazing!" cries Mr *Wesley*. But why amazing? Is not this the common import of the most common actions? Do not you and I make laws in and by our representatives in parliament? May not every debtor,

* *Chrysost. tom.* III. pag. 71, 72. *Edit. Savil.* " *Adam* is a " type of *CHRIST*. How? In this respect; as the former " was the cause of death to all his descendents, though they " did not (like him) eat of the forbidden fruit; so *CHRIST* " is the cause (προξενος) author, procurer of righteousness to all " his seed, though they have not (like him) been personally " obedient; even of that righteousness, which he finished for " us on the cross. For this reason,—*to ascertain and appropri-* " *ate the honour of this righteousness to CHRIST; as a work,* " *not wrought by us, nor wrought in us, but completed for us* " *on the cursed tree.*—He insists and dwells upon that very ob- " servable circumstance, *One*. He iterates and reiterates the " emphatical word ONE. He introduces it again and again, " and can hardly prevail upon himself to discontinue the re- " petition, As by *one man* sin entered into the world--Thro' " the offence of *one* many be dead—Not as it was by *one* that " sinned, so is the free gift—The judgment was by *one* to " condemnation—By *one* man's offence death reigned by *one* " —As by the offence of *one*, judgment came upon all men " unto condemnation—As by the disobedience of *one* many " were made sinners.—Thus does the apostle again and again " introduce the word ONE, and can hardly prevail on him- " self to discontinue the repetition. That if a *Jew* should ask, " How can the world be saved by the well-doing of one, or " by the obedience of *CHRIST?* You may be able to reply " on his own principles, How could the world be condemned " by the evil-doing of one; or by the disobedience of *Adam?*

debtor, when his surety has given full satisfaction to the creditor, say, I have satisfied, I have paid, in my bondsman?

To invalidate this interpretation, you alledge, that the apostle "is not speaking here of the *cause* of our "justification, but the *fruits* of it." Among all the excellent things, which, in your studies and in your travels, you have learned; have you never learned, that between saying and proving there is a wide difference? Never did I meet with a person, who seemed so totally ignorant of this very obvious truth. —Well; we must take your word, without proof; but I hope, not without examination. "The apostle "is speaking of the fruit." Is then the fulfilling of the law the fruit of justification? This is the first time, I apprehend, that any such thing was deliberately affirmed. It is the cause, the adequate, the immediate, and indeed the only proper cause of justification. But the fruits are peace of conscience, and love of GOD; the spirit of adoption, and the hope of glory.

Shew me, Sir, where δικαιωμα, in conjunction with του νομου, signifies the fruits of justification; and not those demands of the law, which must necessarily be satisfied before justification can take place.—Especially, when the phrase is corroborated by that other strong expression, πληρωθη. An expression used by our LORD concerning himself, and the design of his coming into the world. Applicable to him alone, who is the end of the law for righteousness; and descriptive of that obedience, by which alone the law is magnified.

This sense, says *Aspasio*, agrees with the tenor of the apostle's arguing. "Not here;" replies Mr *Wesley*.—Let us then consider the aim, and trace the progress of the apostle's reasoning. He is clearing up and confirming that great privilege of the gospel, *There is no condemnation to them that are in JESUS CHRIST*. This, you will allow, is not the fruit

of juſtification, but juſtification itſelf. As this wants no argument to confirm it, let us proceed in our attention to the ſacred writer. There is no condemnation to thoſe who are true believers in *JESUS CHRIST;* who, in conſequence of this belief, walk not after the fleſh, but after the SPIRIT.

Perhaps, ſome man will ſay, How can this be? ſince even true believers fall ſhort. Nay, they offend, and therefore muſt be liable to the curſe.—*For* this reaſon, they are delivered from condemnation; becauſe *the law of the SPIRIT of life in CHRIST JESUS*, that new diſpenſation, introduced in the room of the old law, promiſes the privilege of pardon, and the gift of the SPIRIT; in which things the true life and real happineſs of mankind conſiſt: promiſes both freely, without any works, purely on account of the righteouſneſs which is in *CHRIST JESUS*. And hereby this new, gracious, bleſſed diſpenſation, *hath made me free from the law;* which convinced me of *ſin;* condemned me for ſin; *and* bound me over unto *death*.

Theſe are glad tidings, doubtleſs; but are they not attended with two inconveniencies? Does not this procedure deprive the law of its due honour, and ſcreen the ſinner from his deſerved puniſhment?—By no means. *For that which was an abſolute impoſſibility, on account of the* ſtrictneſs of the *law, and the weakneſs of human nature, GOD*, to whom nothing is impoſſible, *has* moſt wonderfully *accompliſhed;* by *ſending his own SON, in the likeneſs of ſinful fleſh*, to live among ſinners; to come under their obligations, *and* perform the obedience demanded from them; by ſending him alſo to be a ſacrifice *for ſin;* to be charged with its guilt, and undergo its puniſhment. By this grand expedient, he has provided for the honour and perfect accompliſhment of the law. He has alſo *condemned* and puniſhed *ſin*, with the utmoſt ſeverity.

And

And both these *in the flesh;* in that very nature which was guilty, disabled, ruined,

Should you farther ask, Wherefore is all this? To lay the surest foundation, or make the most complete provision for our justification. *That the righteousness of the law* both its righteous sentence and its righteous precepts, whatever either of suffering or of obedience it required from transgressors, being fulfilled in *CHRIST, might be fulfilled in us;* as it was all done in our name; and as he and we are one; one in civil estimation, for he is our Representative; one in legal estimation, for he is our Surety; one in social estimation, for he is our Bridegroom. For which cause, his righteous acts are ours, and his atoning death is ours.

There was a time, when you embraced these sentiments; when you had such views of things; when such language came out of your mouth, which even now stands upon record, under your own hand. See your "Principles of a Methodist." If you have forgotten them, permit me to remind you of them. "*CHRIST*," you say, "is now the righteousness "of all them that truly believe in him. He for them "paid the ransom by his death; he for them fulfilled "the law in his life. So that now, in him and by "him, every believer may be called a fulfiller of the "law."—Since you pronounce *my* sense of the apostle's words unnatural, I adopt, I espouse *yours* *; and so much the more readily, as it will puzzle sagacity itself, to discern a difference between them.

"I totally deny the criticism on δικαιοσυνη and δικαιωμα." Then be so good as to suggest a better. Or, if this should be somewhat difficult, at least favour us with a reason

* Should Mr *Wesley* say, Though I used these words, I never intended them for a comment on this passage.—If you did not, I imagine, the compilers of our homilies, from whom they are taken, did. At least they regarded this text as a foundation, a warrant, a proof of their doctrine.

reaſon for this your total denial. Not a word of either. Strange! that a man of ordinary diſcernment, ſhould offer to obtrude upon the public ſuch a multitude of naked, unſupported, magiſterial aſſertions! ſhould ever be able to perſuade himſelf, that a poſitive air will paſs for demonſtration, or ſupply the place of argument! If this be to demonſtrate, if this be to confute, the idiot is as capable of both as the philoſopher.—May I not cry out, in your own ſtrain? O how deep an averſion to the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* does this *Arminian* ſcheme diſcover! ſince it will make a man gainſay, when he knows not why, or wherefore.

St *Paul* declares, that *the Gentiles who followed not after righteouſneſs, had attained unto righteouſneſs*. Upon which *Aſpaſio* obſerves, that the righteouſneſs here mentioned, could not be any perſonal righteouſneſs. To which Mr *Weſley* replies, "It was." And to render his reply quite irreſiſtible, a perfect thunderbolt in argumentation; he adds, "*Certainly* it was." —How, Sir! did they attain perſonal righteouſneſs without ſeeking after it? Are *you* becoming a *Calviniſt?* you that had rather be an Atheiſt? Could the zealot of *Geneva* go greater lengths?—*Aſpaſio* will not deny, that theſe Gentiles were ſanctified, as well as juſtified; but he will venture to affirm, that no degree of ſanctification can make the perſons righteous, who are once become ſinners. *CHRIST*, like *Elijah*, firſt caſts his mantle over them; and then, like *Eliſha*, they forſake all and follow him.

The righteouſneſs which the Gentiles attained, could not be a perſonal righteouſneſs. "Certainly it was." —Then it was the righteouſneſs of the law; whereas, the righteouſneſs which they attained, is expreſsly ſaid to be *the righteouſneſs of faith*.—Then it was a righteouſneſs conſiſting of good works and godly tempers. Whereas, their righteouſneſs conſiſted in believing according to the apoſtle's own explanation.

With

With the heart man believeth unto righteouſneſs. Then it was the righteouſneſs of man. Perſonal righteouſneſs and implanted holineſs paſs, in the ſcriptures, under that denomination. Whereas, theſe Gentiles *ſubmitted themſelves to the righteouſneſs of GOD.*—If what theſe Gentiles attained had been a perſonal righteouſneſs, it would have been no ſtumbling-block to the *Jews*. Even they would have fallen in with ſuch a ſyſtem of religion, as ſhould aſcribe righteouſneſs and ſalvation to their own duties and their own deeds.

You ſay, "It was *implanted*, as well as *imputed*." Here, then, you acknowledge an imputed righteouſneſs. You yourſelf uſe the phraſe. You affirm it to be, if not the whole, part, at leaſt, of the apoſtle's doctrine. I wiſh you had been of this mind when you began your letter. Then you would not have conjured me, by all that is venerable and important, to diſcontinue an expreſſion, which conveys—your own—the apoſtle's meaning—and the meaning of the HOLY GHOST.

You join imputed and implanted righteouſneſs. So, in caſe this addreſs to yourſelf ſhould paſs through the printer's hand, would I join a handſome type and pertinent reaſoning. Yet, I apprehend, when you ſit down to examine the eſſay, you will regard only the latter.—What you aſſociate, you aſſociate properly. The firſt is the trunk, the laſt is one of the branches which ſpring from it; but the apoſtle ſeems, in the place before us, to be conſidering the firſt only. The laſt he reſerves for ſome future occaſion.—He is ſpeaking of the righteouſneſs, by which we are ſaved; and that is ſolely the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*.—He is ſpeaking of the righteouſneſs, which was an eye-ſore and an offence to the ſelf-conceited *Jews*; and this was only the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*.—He is ſpeaking of a righteouſneſs, contradiſtinguiſhed to that righteouſneſs which is deſcribed by *he that doth theſe things*; and this can be nothing

thing elſe, but the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. —Therefore, though love of GOD, and conformity to his image; though the pure heart, and the devout affection; are the inſeparable concomitants, or rather the genuine produce of imputed righteouſneſs; yet here they come not under conſideration. To force them into this paſſage, is to make them appear out of due ſeaſon. Such an expoſition may beſpeak a zealous officiouſneſs, not a diſtinguiſhing judgment; becauſe it confounds the order of the apoſtle's plan; it defeats the deſign of his argument, if it does not introduce ſelf-contradiction into his arguing.

This righteouſneſs came upon the Gentiles, *as the former and latter rain upon the earth.* To them was fulfilled the word ſpoken by the prophet *Iſaiah; Let the ſkies pour down righteouſneſs.* As the earth engendereth not the rain; has not the leaſt influence in forming, or the leaſt agency in procuring the refreſhing ſhowers; but only receiveth them, as the mere gift of Providence; ſo theſe Gentiles had not the leaſt influence in effecting, nor the leaſt agency in procuring this righteouſneſs.—When the good news came into their territories, they were totally deſtitute of it; they were utterly unconcerned about it; they knew nothing at all concerning it. But ſeeing it revealed in the goſpel; ſeeing it diſplayed as the work of GOD, and hearing it offered, as the gift of GOD, they were not diſobedient to the heavenly invitation. They believed the report, they accepted the bleſſing, and relied upon it for life and ſalvation. —Then, *as the rain coming down and the ſnow from heaven, returneth not thither again, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud; that it may give ſeed to the ſower, and bread to the eater;* ſo, this ineſtimable truth being admitted into the ſoul, *CHRIST*, and his righteouſneſs, being received to dwell in the heart *; all the powers of

* Eph. iii. 17.

of intellectual nature, or what St *Paul* calls *the inner man*, are exhilarated, quickened, and fructified. They bud as the rose, and blossom as the lily; they bring forth the fruits of inward love, of outward obedience, of universal godliness.

For instruction in righteousness, in the righteousness of *CHRIST*. "Was there ever such a comment be-"fore?" May I not answer, in your own words, Was there ever such a method of confutation used before?—But you add, "The plain meaning is, *for* "*training up in holiness* of heart and of life." I wish you had thought of introducing this interpretation, by the following short preface, "I take it for grant-"ed." You would then have been sure of saying *one* truth.—But if this does not appear plain to me, as you see it did not to *Aspasio*, methinks, you should lend me your spectacles, or favour me with your reasons.

If you please to examine the passage, you will find holiness of heart and life, comprehended in one of the preceding expressions. Προς επανορθωσιν signifies, For restoration of the man to a state of moral uprightness; which must include a renovation of the mind, and a reformation of the conduct. After this comes, very properly, and without any tautology, very needfully, and to the exceeding comfort of the sinner, another most valuable property of the scriptures. They instruct the reader in the *Christian righteousness*; in the justifying righteousness; in that mysterious, but incomparably-precious righteousness, which no other book in the world displays, mentions, or so much as hints. Yet, without which, we could never stand in the judgment, never find acceptance with GOD, nor be admitted into the realms of glory.—If you reject this sense, the apostle's character of the sacred volumes is very defective; it leaves out what is their supreme excellence, and most distinguishing peculiarity; what is first, and above all other things necessary for our

fallen race.—A traveller undertakes to give an account of ſome celebrated picture-gallery. He deſcribes the dimenſions of the ſtructure, the form of the windows, the ornaments of the roof; but he quite forgets, at leaſt, he totally omits, the article of the paintings. Is this a maſterly execution of his deſign? is this ſatisfactory to the hearer's curioſity?

He ſhall convince the world of righteouſneſs—"That "I am not a ſinner, but innocent and holy." How flat and jejune is this expoſition! Nothing can be more ſo, to my taſte.—"Innocent and holy!" Is this all the SPIRIT witneſſes, concerning the moſt adorable and infinitely-deſerving SON of GOD? Does this come up to the inconceivable dignity of his perſon, and the immenſely glorious perfection of his work? Is this ſufficient to comfort the conſcience, ſmitten with a ſenſe of moſt damnable guilt, and alarmed with the terrors of eternal vengeance?

The whole clauſe contains a platform or ſummary of evangelical truth; of that all-important truth, which miniſters are to teach and preach; which the HOLY SPIRIT will own and accompany with his influence; and which is thereby made the power of GOD to the ſalvation of the hearers.—He ſhall convince the world *of ſin;* of the guilty and miſerable ſtate, in which all mankind are plunged by nature; and in which every individual perſon continues, ſo long as he is deſtitute of an intereſt in *CHRIST*, ſo long as he believeth not in HIM who died upon the croſs, and is gone to the FATHER.—Of *righteouſneſs;* he ſhall reveal the REDEEMER's moſt perfect and magnificent righteouſneſs in their hearts. That righteouſneſs, which ſatisfies the juſtice of the MOST HIGH, and brings complete redemption to tranſgreſſors. Teſtifying, not barely, that he is innocent; ſuch was *Adam* in Paradiſe: not barely that he is holy; ſuch are angels in heaven. Shall the eternal CREATOR, even after his humiliation unto death,

death, have no higher a teſtimony than a ſet of mere creatures? Yes, verily; the HOLY GHOST will convince the world, that *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs is the grand and capital bleſſing, which the prophets foretold; and which not only fulfils, but magnifies the law. That it is the righteouſneſs, the very righteouſneſs of the incarnate JEHOVAH; and therefore renders every ſoul, to whom it is imputed, unblameable, unreprovable, complete. Glorious office this! worthy to be the object of the almighty COMFORTER's agency! in performing which, he adminiſters ſtrong conſolation.—Then he ſhall convince of *judgment;* ſhall condemn and caſt out the prince of this world, introducing a moſt happy change into the heart and life; ſhall begin and carry on the work of grace, ſanctification, obedience; and all, through the joyful knowledge, together with the perſonal appropriation, of this juſtifying righteouſneſs.

That we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him. Which cannot be intrinſically, but muſt be imputatively.—This interpretation *Aſpaſio* eſtabliſhes, attempts, at leaſt, to eſtabliſh from the tenor of the context, from the apoſtle's antitheſis, and from ſeveral venerable names. But what are all theſe to Mr *Weſley?* No more than the arrow and the ſpear to *leviathan.* Nay, not ſo much. That ſcaly monſter *eſteemeth iron as ſtraw, and braſs as rotten wood.* But Mr *Weſley*, caſed in his own ſelf-ſufficiency, eſteemeth all the aforementioned evidences as mere nothings. He totally diſregards them. Reaſon, grammar, precedents, are eclipſed by his bare negative, and vaniſh into an inſignificancy, not worthy of notice.

When *Aſpaſio*, ſupported by ſuch great authority, ſays, This cannot be intrinſically, but muſt be imputatively; Mr *Weſley*, ſupported by his greater ſelf, replies, "Both the one and the other."—But does he duly advert to the apoſtle's ſubject, or follow the clue of the context? The *ſubject* is reconciliation to

GOD, justification before GOD, or *that*, whatever it be, which is implied in not imputing trespasses. The *context* intimates, that intrinsic holiness is not yet taken into consideration, but is reserved for the next chapter. There the apostle exhorts the *Corinthians*, *not to receive this* infinitely-rich *grace* of free justification, *in vain;* but to shew its efficacy, to shew its excellency, and recommend it to the unbelieving world, by an unblameable conversation, *giving no offence in any thing*.

Justification then is the only point which the apostle, in this passage, considers; and justification is the fruit of imputed righteousness solely, not of inherent righteousness in any degree. This we must allow, unless we prefer the impositions of *Trent*, before the confession of our church. "Faith says unto us, It is not I "that take away your sins, but *CHRIST* only; "and to him only I send you for that purpose, forsaking therein all your good words, thoughts, and "works, and only putting your trust in *CHRIST*." Thus speaks, and thus teaches, our reformed church. —"If any one say, that man is justified only by the "imputation of *CHRIST*'s righteousness, or only "by the remission of sins, without the co-operation "of inherent grace and holy love, let him be accursed *." Thus dogmatizes, and thus anathematizes, that mother of falsehoods.—Chuse now your side. For my part, I renounce and abjure the proud and iniquitous decree. If you persist in your present opinion, there will be an apparent harmony between yourself and *Rome*, but an essential difference between yourself and *Aspasio*.

"GOD, *thro' him*, first *accounts*, and then *makes* "us righteous." How? Does GOD account us righteous, before he makes us so? Then his judgment is not according to truth. Then he reckons us to be righteous,

* *Si quis dixerit, hominem justificari, vel sola imputatione justitiæ, vel sola remissione peccatorum, exclusa gratia et charitate, anathema esto.* Sess. vi. can. 11.

righteous, when we are really otherwiſe. Is not this the language of your doctrine? this the unavoidable conſequence of your notion? But how harſh, if not horrid, does it ſound in every ear? Is not this abſolutely irreconcileable with our ideas of the ſupreme BEING, and equally incompatible with the dictates of ſcripture? There we are taught that *GOD juſtifieth the ungodly*.—Mark the words. *The ungodly* are the objects of the divine juſtification. But can he account the ungodly righteous? Impoſſible!—How then does he act? He firſt makes them righteous *.—After what manner? By imputing to them the righteouſneſs of his dear SON.—Then he pronounces them righteous, and moſt truly. He treats them as righteous, and moſt juſtly. In ſhort, then he abſolves them from guilt; adopts them for his children; and makes them heirs of his eternal kingdom.—In the grand tranſaction, thus regulated, mercy and truth meet together. All proceeds in the moſt harmonious and beautiful conſiſtency, with the ſeveral attributes of GOD; with his whole revealed will; and with all his righteous law.

"*The righteouſneſs which is of GOD by faith*, is "both *imputed* and *inherent*."—Then it is like interweaving linen and woollen; the motely mixture forbidden to the *Iſraelites*. Or rather, like weaving a thread of the fineſt gold, with a hempen cord or a ſpider's web.—The righteouſneſs which is of GOD, is perfect, conſummate, everlaſting. Not ſo inherent righteouſneſs, your own ſelf being judge, and your own pen being witneſs.—In the righteouſneſs which is of GOD, the apoſtle deſires to be found, before the great and terrible tribunal of the LORD. His own righteouſneſs, or the righteouſneſs which is inherent, he

* Agreeable to this, our church ſpeaks; *In juſtification, of unjuſt we are made juſt before GOD*; and adds, *This is the ſtrong rock and foundation of Chriſtian religion.* Hom. of Juſtif. part 2.

he abandons, as absolutely improper for this great purpose; being no more fitted to give him boldness at the day of judgment, than dung and filth are fit to introduce a person, with credit and dignity, to court. —The righteousness which is of GOD is unknown to reason; is revealed from heaven; and without the works of the law. Whereas, the righteousness inherent, is discoverable by reason; was known to the Heathens; and consists in a conformity of heart and life to the precepts of the law.—By the latter, we act, we obey, and offer our spiritual sacrifices unto GOD. By the former, we work nothing; we render nothing unto GOD, but only receive of his grace.

They are, therefore, not the same, but totally distinct. To blend and confound them, betrays unskilfulness in the word of righteousness; derogates from the honour of *CHRIST*, and tends to cherish a legal frame, or, what the scripture calls, *a spirit of bondage*.—If you would approve yourself a workman, that need not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth, thus you should speak, and thus you should write; the righteousness of GOD is always imputed. But, being imputed, it produces the righteousness inherent. Being justified by the former, saved from hell, and rendered meet for heaven; we are sanctified also, and disposed to love the LORD, who has dealt so bountifully with us; and if to love, then to worship him, to serve him, to imitate him.

My faith fixes on both the *meritorious life* and *atoning death of CHRIST*. "Here we clearly agree." —How can you clearly agree, either with *Aspasio*, or with yourself, or with common sense?—How with *Aspasio?* Since you question, in direct contrariety to his sentiments, whether the death of *CHRIST* be not the whole of what St *Paul* styles *the obedience* of ONE.—How with *yourself?* For did you not declare,

a little

a little while ago, that fallen man " is not juſtified by " perfect obedience? Is not *CHRIST*'s meritorious life perfect obedience? If your faith fixes on this perfect obedience, is it not for the purpoſe of juſtification?—How with *common ſenſe?* Since you ſuppoſe, that the " ſcripture aſcribes the whole of our ſalva- " tion to the death of *CHRIST*," ſo entirely aſcribes it to the death of *CHRIST*, that " there was no " need of his fulfilling the moral law, in order to " purchaſe redemption for us;" what reaſon, or ſhadow of reaſon can you have, to fix upon what *we* call the merit of his life? If what you ſuppoſe and affirm be true, there was no kind of meritorious efficacy in his life. His life and all his labours were, in this reſpect, a mere ſuperfluity. Salvation might have been obtained, and redemption purchaſed, without their concurrence. Therefore to fix upon them, is to fix upon a phantom, and to reſt your hopes upon *a thing of nought*.

But ſtay. Am I not repeating the miſconduct, which proved ſo fatal to the famous Earl of *Warwick*, and his forces? At the battle of *Gladmore*, while the ſcale of victory hung in ſuſpenſe, they ſaw a conſiderable body of troops advancing. Suppoſing them to be enemies, the bowman made a general diſcharge, and galled them with their arrows. But they ſoon perceived their miſtake; that they had been oppoſing their friends, and annoying their allies. Perhaps, by this time, you are become my ally. You may have ſeen your errors; may have corrected your notions; ſaying, in ratification of both, " We agree."

That is, " I would no longer exclude the meritorious obedience of *CHRIST*. But this, together " with his atoning death, I look upon as the only " cauſe of my juſtification.—This I call his righteouſneſs; and this, being imputed to me, beomes my " plea, my portion, and rational foundation for my " everlaſting felicity.—This I receive by faith; which

" I

"I now look upon, not as conſtituting any part of "my recommendation, but only as receptive of the "fulneſs laid up for me in *CHRIST*.—Though "the law of works ſaith, Do and live; I am now "made ſenſible, that the law of faith ſays, Be verily "perſuaded, that *CHRIST* is ſufficient for thy ac-"ceptance, without any doing of thy own at all.— "Since *CHRIST* is given to me in the ſacred re-"cord, given to me as a ſinner, to be received with-"out any conditions, I joyfully accept the gift. I am "ſatisfied with his doing and ſuffering: they are di-"vinely excellent, and infinitely ſufficient: I neither "wiſh for, nor think of any thing more, to obtain "my complete ſalvation.—This way of ſalvation ef-"fectually excludes boaſting; and at the ſame time "produces thoſe deſirable effects,—that love of GOD; "that delight in his perfections; that conformity to "his will; which the law of works requires in vain."

If this is what you mean by "We agree." I would ſeal and ratify the agreement, with the laſt wiſh, and the laſt words of the celebrated Father *Paul*, *Eſto perpetua*. Be this the caſe, and you ſhall have not only the right hand of fellowſhip, but the right hand of pre-eminence.—Only I crave one favour in return. Diſmiſs thoſe injurious inſinuations, which cauſe your readers to ſuſpect, that *Aſpaſio* conſiders the meritorious life of *CHRIST*, ſeparate from his atoning death. Whereas, he affirms them to be inſeparable, like the correſpondence of motion between the two eyes. Try if you can make one of your eyes move to the right, while the other wheels off to the left. When you have done this, then, and not till then, may you have ſome reaſonable pretence for theſe your ſuggeſtions.

Alas! *quanta de ſpe decidi!* I find my hopes were too ſanguine. We are not come to the deſired coalition. In this very paragraph, you begin to fly off. By talking of imputed righteouſneſs, you tell us, "We are expoſed to an exceeding great hazard; even

"the

" the hazard of living and dying without holineſs." —Pray, Sir, have you ſeen a little piece written upon this ſubject by the Rev. Mr *Witherſpoon?* If you have not, let me recommend it to your peruſal. In caſe you are ignorant of that powerful influence, which juſtification through the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST* has upon ſanctification and true holineſs, from this treatiſe you may learn ſome valuable knowledge. In caſe the author of this treatiſe is miſtaken, in maintaining the indiſſoluble connection of juſtification with true godlineſs; and the never-failing efficacy of the REDEEMER's righteouſneſs, to bring forth willing obedience in the believer; you may have an opportunity of rectifying his ſentiments. You may give us, in your next publication, a preſervative, not only againſt *unſettled*, but againſt *unſound* notions in religion.

Theron, ſpeaking of *gems*, ſays, when nicely poliſhed, and prodigal of their luſtre, they ſtand candidates for a ſeat on the *virtuous* fair-one's breaſt.—This diſpleaſes Mr *Weſley*. Would he then have gems placed on the *vitious* or laſcivious breaſt? Or would he have them put to no uſe at all, but buried in darkneſs? Did the ALMIGHTY pour ſuch a brilliancy upon them, only that they might be conſigned over to obſcurity? Did he not rather array them with luſtre and with charms, that they might diſplay ſomething of his own brightneſs; incite his rational creatures to admire his tranſcendent excellency, and teach his faithful people to apprehend the emphaſis of that animating promiſe, *They ſhall be mine, in the day that I make up my jewels*.

" I can't reconcile this with St *Paul*. He ſays, *not* " *with pearls;* by a parity of reaſon, not with dia- " monds." —Do you rightly underſtand St *Paul?* Don't you dwindle his manly and noble idea, into a meanneſs and littleneſs of ſenſe? ſuch as befits the ſuperſtitious and contracted ſpirit of a hermit, rather than the generous and exalted temper of a believer;

who ſtands faſt in the liberty, wherewith CHRIST hath made him free?—Our LORD ſays not, they that are *ſplendidly apparelled*, are apparelled unſuitably to Chriſtianity, or in a manner inconſiſtent with the fear of GOD; but they *are in kings courts*, and their dreſs is adapted to their ſtation. Neither does St. *Paul* forbid the *uſe* of pearls, or coſtly array, when a perſon's circumſtances will afford them, and his ſituation in life may require them. He rather cautions againſt the *abuſe*, againſt looking upon theſe glittering things, as any part of their true dignity, on which they value themſelves, or by which they would be recommended to others. The word is not ενδυσασθαι, *put on* *, nor φορειν, *wear* †, but κοσμειν, *adorn*. "Let them not "place their excellency in ſuch mean diſtinctions; "no, nor covet to diſtinguiſh themſelves by theſe "ſuperficial decorations; but rather by the ſubſtan- "tial ornaments of real godlineſs, and good works; "which will render both them and their religion "truly amiable."

The apoſtle *Peter* obſerves the ſame propriety of ſpeech, and the ſame correctneſs of ſentiment. *Whoſe adorning, let it not be that outward adorning of wearing of gold, or plaiting the hair, or putting on of apparel.* Was this an abſolute prohibition of the ſeveral particulars mentioned, it would forbid all kind of cloathing, or the putting on of any apparel. Take the paſſage in your rigorous ſenſe, and it concludes as forcibly againſt garments, as againſt ornaments; we muſt even go naked, and lay aſide our cloaths, as well as our gems. Whereas, underſtood according to the natural ſignification of the words (ων ο κοσμος, not ων το ενδυμα) it conveys a very important, and a very ſeaſonable exhortation; "Chriſtians, ſcorn to borrow your re- "commendations from the needle, the loom, or the "toy-ſhop. This may be the faſhion of a vain world.

But

* Mark vi. 9. † Matth. xi. 8.

" But let your embelliſhments, or that which beautifies " and diſtinguiſhes your character, be of a ſuperior na- " ture. Let it be *internal;* not ſuch as the ſheep have " wore, or the ſilk-worms ſpun; but ſuch as is peculiar " to the immortal mind, or *the hidden man of the heart.* " Let it be *ſubſtantial;* not ſuch as the moth corrodes, " or ſuch as periſhes in uſing; but *that which is not* " *corruptible;* which being planted on earth, will be " tranſplanted into heaven, and being ſown in time, " will flouriſh to eternity.—Let it be that adorning, " whoſe excellency is unqueſtionable, and *whoſe praiſe* " *is of GOD*, even *the ornament of a meek and quiet* " *ſpirit:* which will render you, not indeed like the " grandees of the earth, but like the SON of the " HIGHEST; ſhewing, that you are united to " him; intereſted in him; and partakers of his divine " nature."

" In all things, I perceive, you are too favourable, " both to *the deſire of the fleſh, and the deſire of the eye.*" —I rather think, Mr *Weſley* is too cenſorious of others, and too indulgent to himſelf. Why may not *Theron* wear his richly-emboſſed gold watch, and his lady uſe her golden buckle ſet with diamonds, as well as you and I wear a ſilver buckle *, or make uſe of our ſilver watch? Why may not an earl or a counteſs † put on

* That Mr *Weſley* may not ſuſpect I am pleading for ſelf-indulgence, I will give him my word, that I have never wore my ſilver buckles, ſince I was in mourning for his *Royal Highneſs.* Neither ſhall I have one uneaſy thought, if I never put them on again.

† Should it be ſaid, the perſons to whom St *Peter* wrote, were in mean circumſtances; therefore ſuch grandees are out of the queſtion. I anſwer, The perſons *for* whom St *Peter* wrote, were all Chriſtians to the very end of the world. Among theſe, though there may not be *many* grand, nor many noble, yet, bleſſed be GOD, there are *ſome.* And when theſe go to receive their celeſtial crown, we truſt, it will be ſaid,

— — *Uno ablato non deficit alter*
Aureus.

their robes, ſumptuous with embroidery, or their coronet, glittering with jewels, as inoffenſively, as you and I put on a beaver-hat, or trail after us a prunella gown? There is no neceſſity for this our ſprucenefs. A fuſtian jacket would keep our backs warm, and a flannel cap our heads, as well as our more elegant array.—Methinks, therefore, we ſhould either abſtain from all needleſs finery in our own dreſs, or elſe forbear to cenſure it in others. Rather, we ſhould all, in our reſpective ſtations, and according to our reſpective circumſtances, uſe theſe things as not abuſing them; remembering, that the faſhion of this world paſſeth away. Looking therefore for that city of the living GOD, *whoſe wall is of jaſper, whoſe buildings are of pure gold, and whoſe foundations are garniſhed with all manner of precious ſtones;* but whoſe external ſplendor is infinitely ſurpaſſed by the glory of GOD, which lightens it, and by the preſence of the LAMB, which is the light thereof.—When we are bleſſed with clear apprehenſions of this ineffable glory which ſhall be revealed; when we live under a delightful perſuaſion, that GOD hath given to us this eternal life; gems will have but little luſtre in our eye, and leſs and leſs allurements for our heart. All the pomp of this tranſient world will appear to us, as the palace of *Verſailles*, or the gardens of *Stowe*, would appear to ſome ſuperior being; who, from an exalted ſtand in æther, ſhould contemplate the terraqueous globe; and at one view take in its vaſt dimenſions, its prodigious revolutions, and its moſt copious furniture.

"You are a gentle caſuiſt as to every ſelf-indul-
"gence, which a plentiful fortune can furniſh."—I would conſider the end for which theſe things were created, and point out and enforce their proper improvements. They were created, not to tantalize, but to treat us; not to enſnare, but to gratify us. *Then* they are properly improved, when we enjoy them with moderation, and render them inſtruments of uſefulneſs;

fulneſs; when they are regarded as pregnant tokens of our CREATOR's love, and act as endearing incitements of our gratitude.—What you call my caſuiſtry, is built upon a maxim, which will never be controverted; *Every creature of GOD is good, if received with thankſgiving.* It is nothing elſe, but an attempt to diſplay what is affirmed in the former clauſe, and to enforce what is preſcribed in the latter.

In the ſixth letter, in the ninth, and in other parts. *Theron* enumerates ſome of the fineſt productions, and moſt choice accommodations which the earth, the air, the ſeas afford.—In imitation of the apoſtle, who in one ſentence expreſſes abundantly more, than my three volumes contain; *HE giveth us all things richly to enjoy.*—In imitation of the Pſalmiſt alſo, who, in ſeveral of his hymns, eſpecially in *Pſalm* civ. celebrates the profuſe munificence of JEHOVAH; profuſe, even in temporal bleſſings, and with regard to our animal nature.—Does our nature call for ſomething to ſupport it? Here is *bread, which ſtrengthens man's heart*, and is the ſtaff of his life. Does our nature go farther, and covet ſomething to pleaſe it? Here is *wine, that maketh glad the heart of man;* regaling his palate, and exhilarating his ſpirits. Is our nature yet more craving, and deſirous of ſomething to beautify it? Here is *oil, that maketh the face to ſhine;* that the countenance may appear both chearful and amiable; that gaiety may ſparkle in the eye, while beauty glows in the cheek.—Now I cannot perſuade myſelf, nor is all Mr *Weſley*'s rhetoric powerful enough to convince me, that it is any diſcredit or any error to follow ſuch examples.

"But I mention the exquiſite reliſh of *turbot*, and "the deliciouſneſs of *ſturgeon*. And are not ſuch ob- "ſervations beneath the dignity of a miniſter of "*CHRIST?*" Mr *Weſley* does not obſerve from whom theſe remarks proceed. Not from *Aſpaſio*, but *Theron*. To make *him* ſpeak like a miniſter of *CHRIST*,

CHRIST, or like a Chriſtian of the firſt rank, would be entirely out of character. It would have betrayed an utter ignorance, or a total diſregard of *Horace*'s rule;

Reddere perſonæ ſcit convenientia cuique.

However, I am willing to take all upon myſelf, and be reſponſible for the obnoxious ſentiments. I would only aſk, Is any thing ſpoken of, which the ALMIGHTY has not made? and ſhall I think it beneath my dignity, to magnify the work of his hands? Is any thing ſpoken of, which the ALMIGHTY has not beſtowed? and ſhall I think it a diminution of my character, to acknowledge the various gifts of his bounty? Has GOD moſt high thought it worthy of his infinite majeſty, to endue the creatures with ſuch pleaſing qualities, as render them a delicious entertainment to our appetites? and ſhall I reckon it a mean unbecoming employ, to bear witneſs to this condeſcending indulgence of the DEITY?—Particularity in recounting benefits, is ſeldom deemed a fault. It comes under no ſuch denomination, in *my* ſyſtem of ethics. If Mr *Weſley* has a better, in which neglect and inſenſibility are ranked among the virtues, I muſt undoubtedly, upon thoſe principles, drop my plea. Where *they* are commendable, my conduct muſt be inexcuſable; and if inexcuſable, I fear, irreclaimable. For I ſhall never be aſhamed to take a fiſh, a fowl, or a fruit in my hand, and ſay, "A preſent this from "our all-bountiful CREATOR! See its beauty, "taſte its ſweetneſs, admire its excellency, and love "and adore the great Benefactor. To us he hath "freely granted theſe, and other delights; though "he himſelf, in the days of his fleſh, had gall to eat, "and vinegar to drink."

"But the mentioning theſe in ſuch a manner, is a "ſtrong encouragement of luxury and ſenſuality."

—If,

—If, to enumerate a *few* of these dainties *, be a strong encouragement to luxury, how much more, to create them *all*, and clothe them with such inviting properties, and recommend them by such delicate attractives?—But "the mentioning them in such a "manner." What! Is this an encouragement to sensuality? to mention them as so many instances of divine beneficence, and so many motives to human gratitude? This, methinks, is the way to prevent the abuse of our animal enjoyments, and to correct their pernicious tendency. This is the way to endear their adorable GIVER, and render them incentives to love. And the love of GOD is a better guard against luxury, a better preservative from sensuality, than all the rigid rules of the cloyster or monastery.

Upon the whole, however well affected Mr *Wesley* may be to our civil, he seems to be a kind of malecontent with regard to our spiritual liberties; those I mean, which are consigned over to us in the *Magna Charta* of the gospel.

We have liberty, through *JESUS CHRIST*, to use not one only, but every creature of GOD; and to use them in a *sanctified* manner, so that they shall not sensualize our affections, but refine and exalt them, by knitting our hearts more inseparably to their munificent CREATOR. According to that clause in the heavenly deed, *All things are yours*. This you would curtail and diminish.

We have liberty to look upon ourselves as justified before GOD, without any works of our own; made perfectly righteous in his sight, without any personal obedience whatever; entirely through our Representative and Surety, what he has suffered in our name and in our stead. According to those gracious declarations, *In the LORD have I righteousness;* and, *By the obedience of ONE shall many be made righteous*. This you would supersede and abolish.

We

* The scripture calls them, *royal dainties*, *Gen.* xlix. 20.

We have liberty to claim and receive this unſpeakable privilege, without performing any conditions, or ſeeking any pre-requiſites; having no other qualification, than that of being loſt ſinners, and needing no other warrant than the divine grant, made and recorded in the word of the goſpel. According to that moſt generous invitation, *Come, buy wine and buy milk, without money and without price.* According to that moſt gratuitous conceſſion, *Whoever will, let him take of the water of life freely.* This you would clog and embarraſs.

We have liberty through our LORD's atonement, to look upon ourſelves as made free from all guilt; to conſider our ſins, as abſolutely blotted out, never to appear again, either to our utter condemnation, or to our leaſt confuſion.

The three firſt articles of the charge, I think, are made clear, too clear and undeniable, in the courſe of the preceding letters. Should you challenge me to prove the laſt, I refer you to your aſſize-ſermon. There you tell us, that the ſins of true believers, as well as of unbelievers, will be brought to light, and expoſed before the whole world, at the day of univerſal judgment.

Here, I muſt do you the juſtice to acknowledge, that you have not, as in your epiſtolary animadverſions on *Aſpaſio*, required your audience to aſſent, merely becauſe you affirm. You attempt to eſtabliſh your opinion by the authority of *Solomon; GOD ſhall bring every work into judgment, with every ſecret thing, whether it be good, or whether it be evil.* But you ſeem to forget, that the ſins of the believer are τα μη οντα, *things that are not.* *CHRIST has blotted out, as a thick cloud, our tranſgreſſions; yea, as a thin cloud our ſins* *.—Conſider them as moral ſtains, or cauſes

* *If.* xliv. 22. עב *Nubes.* עבה *Nubecula.* Thus *Houbigant* tranſlates the words; and, I think, very juſtly. The firſt ſeems

cauſes of defilement; they are waſhed away by the blood of *JESUS*. And ſurely the blood of GOD muſt have as powerful an effect on our ſouls, as the waters of *Jordan* had upon *Naaman*'s body *.—Conſider them as contracting guilt, or deſerving puniſhment; they are vacated; they are diſannulled; and, like the ſcape-goat, diſmiſſed into the pathleſs inacceſſible wilderneſs; *when ſought for, they ſhall not be found*.—Conſider them in either of theſe reſpects, or under any other character, and they are, not only covered or ſecreted, but aboliſhed. Juſt as the darkneſs of the night is aboliſhed, by the ſplendor of this clear, ſerene, delightful morning.

Bring to our ſight, if you can, the milſtone that is caſt into the depths of the ſea. Reſtore, to its former conſiſtence, the cloud that is diſſolved in rain; or find one dreg of filthineſs in the new-fallen ſnow. Then may thoſe iniquities be brought again into notice, which have been done away by the High Prieſt of our profeſſion; which have been expiated by the perfect, moſt effectual, and glorious oblation of himſelf.—His people, when riſing from the bed of death, will *have no more conſcience of ſin* in themſelves. They are fully and for ever free from the accuſation of others; ſo free, that ſin ſhall not ſo much as be mentioned unto them; no, nor even remembered by the LORD their GOD any more. They are made holy, unblemiſhable, and unreprovable in his ſight. And they ſhall be preſented, at the great day, without ſpot or wrinkle, or any ſuch thing.

Thus may we, and thus may our readers, be preſented! ſo ſhall we meet each other with comfort at the

ſeems to denote an immenſe arrangement of clouds, covering the ſky. The ſecond ſignifies a looſe detached fragment, floating in the upper regions. The firſt fixed like a vault; the laſt ſailing like a ſkiff. This ſenſe diverſifies the prophet's imagery; and, inſtead of tautology, preſents us with a beautiful gradation.

* 2 Kings v. 14.

the awful tribunal, with joy amidst the angels of light, and with everlasting transport around the throne of the LAMB.—To promote this blessed event, is the sole aim of these remonstrances, and the unfeigned desire of, Rev. Sir, Your, &c.

LETTER XI.

Rev. Sir,

MY last concluded with a sketch of our Christian *liberty*, extracted from the *charter* of the gospel. We have liberty—to use all the creatures, and in a sanctified manner—to consider ourselves, as made perfectly righteous, through the obedience of *CHRIST*—to receive this grand prerogative, without performing any conditions,—to look upon all our sins, as totally and finally done away, through the blood of *JESUS*.

Perhaps you will ask, Where is your liberty from the *power* of sin? Does not this come within the extent of your charter? Most certainly. You injure our doctrine, if you deny it: we are undone irreparably, if we continue destitute of it. Every other immunity, without this crowning privilege, would be like the magnificent palace and the beautiful gardens of *Pharaoh;* while swarms of locusts filled them with their loathed intrusion.

But observe, Sir; freedom from the dominion of sin, is the result of all the preceding blessings. By revealing these in our hearts, and *CHRIST* the author of them, the HOLY SPIRIT acts as the SPIRIT of liberty. You are a philosopher; you understand the theory of light. From the association of various rays, or the mixture of many *parent-colours*, springs that first of elements, and best of material gifts, *light*. So, from the union, and united enjoyment of all those heavenly treasures, springs that most desirable

desirable liberty, the *liberty of righteousness*. This is that truth which makes us free. This is that knowledge, by which we are renewed after the image of HIM that created us. And these are the exceeding precious promises, by which we are partakers of the divine nature. Hence we are taught to love the LORD our GOD, and to delight in his adorable perfections. By this means, they look with a smiling aspect upon us, and are unspeakably amiable to us. Under such views, we say of sin, we say of all our evil and corrupt affections, *Do not I hate them, O LORD, that hate thee? and am I not grieved with those that rise up against thee? I hate them with a perfect hatred; I count them mine enemies.*

Our SAVIOUR's obedience. This phrase disgusts Mr *Wesley*. Therefore he cries, "O say, with the "good old Puritans, our SAVIOUR's *death* and *me*-"*rits*."—*Aspasio* speaks with St *Paul*, *By the obedience of one*.—He speaks with St *Peter*, *Faith in the righteousness of our GOD and SAVIOUR*.—He speaks with the prophets *Isaiah* and *Jeremiah*, *In the LORD have I righteousness*; and, *JEHOVAH is our righteousness*.—Having these precedents, he need not be very solicitous, who else is for him, or who is against him.

Though not very solicitous about this matter, he is somewhat surprised at your vehement address; that you should exhort him so earnestly to "speak with "the good old Puritans." Has not your printer committed a mistake? Did not the clause stand thus in your manuscript? "With my good friends the *Armi*-"*nians*." They indeed disapprove this expression; because it is, when rightly understood, a dagger in the heart of their cause.—But as to the Puritans, they are, one and all, on the contrary side. Their language is a perfect union with *Aspasio*'s. They glory in the meritorious obedience of their great MEDIATOR. They extol his imputed righteousness in almost every page, and pour contempt upon all other works, com-

pared with their LORD's.—What will not an author affirm, who ventures to affirm or insinuate that the Puritan writers disuse this manner of speaking? For my part, I know not any set of writers in the world, so eminently remarkable for this very doctrine, and this very diction. I said, in a former letter, we would inquire into this particular; but the inquiry is quite unnecessary. It would be like *Uriel*'s searching for the sun, while he stands in its orb, and is surrounded with its lustre.

"We swarm with *Antimonians*."—And we must swarm with persons, whose hearts are enmity against the law of GOD, so long as *your* tenets find acceptance. Who can delight in a law, which neither has been, nor can be fulfilled by them? which bears witness against them, and is the ministration of death unto them? testifying, like the hand-writing on Belshazzar's wall, *Thou art weighed in the balances, and found wanting*.—Whereas, when we see it fully satisfied on our behalf, by our SURETY's obedience; no longer denouncing a curse, but pronouncing us blessed; not pursuing us, like the avenger of blood, but opening a city of refuge for the safety of our souls; we shall then be reconciled to its constitution and design; we shall then take pleasure in its precepts and prohibitions. We shall say with the Psalmist, *LORD, what love have I unto thy law! all the day long is my study in it.*

My mouth shall shew forth thy righteousness and thy salvation—"Thy mercy which brings my salvation," says Mr *Wesley*, in opposition to the sense assigned by *Aspasio*. Which sense has been vindicated already. I shall therefore not renew my arguments, but only express my wonder.

As Mr *Wesley*, is a minister of the gospel, I wonder, *that he* should studiously set aside, what is the peculiarity and glory of the evangelical revelation. "Mercy "which brings salvation," is what an unenlightened *Jew* might have preached; nay, what a more ignorant

rant Heathen might have taught. But ſalvation thro' a divine righteouſneſs, as the adequate and meritorious cauſe thereof, is the diſtinguiſhing doctrine and the ſovereign excellency of the goſpel.

As Mr *Weſley* is a ſinner, I wonder, he ſhould chuſe to weaken the foundation of his own and our hope. Why mercy *alone?* Is it not better to put our truſt in mercy, erecting its throne on a propitiation, and thence holding forth the golden ſceptre? By the obedience of IMMANUEL, the law is ſatisfied, as to its penalty; is fulfilled, as to its precept; and is, in every reſpect, unſpeakably magnified. This ſhews us the inexhauſtible fountain of mercy unſealed, and every obſtruction to its free and copious flow removed.

As Mr *Weſley* is zealous for the honour of GOD, I wonder, he ſhould not prefer that method of ſalvation, by which every divine attribute is moſt abundantly glorified. This is not done, by expecting pardon and acceptance from mercy alone; but by expecting and receiving them, through our REDEEMER's righteouſneſs and blood. Then we have a diſplay, not only of infinite love, but of inflexible juſtice, and incomprehenſible wiſdom. Here they mingle their beams, and ſhine forth with united and eternal ſplendour.

Conſidering theſe things, I am ſtill inclined to embrace *Aſpaſio*'s interpretation of this, and ſuch like paſſages of ſcripture, wherein ſalvation is aſcribed to divine mercy, exerciſed through the obedience and death of *CHRIST*, which gives as great a heightening to the bleſſing, as the atmoſphere gives to the rays of light, or as the light itſelf imparts to the ſcenes of creation.

Thoſe divine treaſures which ſpring from the imputation of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs. "Not a word "of his atoning blood."—I wiſh you would turn back to *Aſpaſio*'s definition of this phraſe, as it is laid down at the beginning of the conference, to be the ground-

ground-work of all the dialogues, and of all the letters. You will then perceive, that there is not a word of this kind, but *CHRIST*'s atoning blood is included in it. Without this, his righteousness had not been perfect. Without this, his righteousness could not be imputed.—Some people have a treacherous memory, and really forget things. Others have a perverse mind, and resolve not to regard them. Which of these is Mr *Wesley*'s case, I presume not to say, let his own conscience determine.

'Tis true, we "love to speak of the righteousness "of *CHRIST*." Yet not because "it affords a "fairer excuse for our own unrighteousness." For indeed it affords no excuse at all. On the contrary, it renders unrighteousness quite inexcusable, because it yields new and nobler motives to all holy obedience. —But we love to speak of the righteousness of *CHRIST*, because it is the most comprehensive expression, and the grandest theme in the world.—The *most comprehensive expression;* as it denotes all that he has done and suffered, both his meritorious life, and his atoning blood.—The *grandest theme*. Consider all those blessings, which have been vouchsafed to GOD's people, before our SAVIOUR appeared on earth; add all the blessings which will be vouchsafed, until the consummation of all things; consider all that good, which is comprised in a deliverance from the nethermost hell; together with all that bliss which is contained in the pleasures and glories of the heavenly state. All these to be enjoyed through a boundless eternity, and by multitudes of redeemed sinners, numberless as the sands upon the sea-shore. Then ask, What is the procuring cause of all? whence do these inestimable benefits proceed? From the righteousness, the sole righteousness of *JESUS CHRIST*.—Is it not then worthy to be uppermost in our thoughts, and foremost on our tongues? Might not the very stones cry out, and reproach our insensibility, if we did

did not *love* to talk of this divinely-precious righteouſneſs?

Faith is a perſuaſion, that *CHRIST* has ſhed his blood *for me*, and fulfilled all righteouſneſs *in my ſtead*. "I can by no means ſubſcribe to this defi-"nition."—You might very ſafely ſubſcribe to this definition, if you would ſuffer St *Peter* to ſpeak his genuine ſentiments. Deſcribing the faith of the primitive Chriſtians, he calls it πιστιν εν δικαιοσυνη *Faith in the righteouſneſs*. He ſays nothing of the atoning blood; but does he therefore exclude it? He ſpeaks of nothing but the juſtifying righteouſneſs; and will you totally diſcard it? It is the central point in his faith, and ſhall it have no place in yours!—*Righteouſneſs*, he aſſures us, was the object of the believer's faith, even the righteouſneſs *of our GOD and SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST*. But how could this be the object of their faith, if it was not fulfilled in their ſtead? Or how could they truly believe in this righteouſneſs, if they did not regard it, as performed for them, and imputed to them?

"There are hundreds, yea thouſands of true be-"lievers, who never once thought, one way or the "other of *CHRIST*'s fulfilling all righteouſneſs in "their ſtead."—Then their faith is like the ſight of the perſon, *who ſaw men as trees walking*. He ſaw them indeed, but very dimly, indiſtinctly, confuſedly; and 'tis pity but they were more thoroughly inſtructed unto the kingdom of GOD.—Not one of thoſe thouſands, provided he fixes his hope wholly upon the merits of *CHRIST*, would reject this delightful truth, if it was offered, with ſcriptural evidence, to his underſtanding. Reject it! No ſurely. He would joyfully embrace it, if offered, with that ſingle, but undeniable evidence; *CHRIST was made ſin for us, though he knew no ſin, that we might be made the righteouſneſs of GOD in him*.

"You perſonally know many, who, to this hour,

"have

" have no idea of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs."—Surely then it behoves you, as a lover of ſouls, and as an ambaſſador of *CHRIST*, to teach them the way of GOD more perfectly *. So doing, you will be employed much more ſuitably to your function, and much more profitably to your brethren, than in your preſent attempt. By which, you would weaken the hands, and defeat the deſigns of thoſe, who endeavour to ſpread abroad the ſavour of this knowledge, in every place; and who, notwithſtanding all that you perſonally know, muſt unalterably perſiſt in their method. Which is, to regulate their definition of faith, not by the ſtate of your ſuppoſed believers, but by the expreſs declaration of the unerring word. And from this, they have authority to maintain, that faith in the imputed righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, is a fundamental principle to every believer, who underſtands upon what foundation he is ſaved.

Theſe your acquaintance, though they have no idea of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs, yet " have each " of them a divine evidence and conviction, *CHRIST* " *loved me, and gave himſelf for me.*"—In this caſe, don't you take rather too much upon you? Have you then the apoſtolical gift of diſcerning ſpirits? If not, it will be impoſſible for you to know the man, excluſive of yourſelf, who is certainly poſſeſſed of this divine evidence. You may form a charitable judgment or a prevailing hope; which ſeems to be the utmoſt you can warrantably claim with regard to others. And while you entertain this hope, we ſhall allow it to indicate the benevolence of your heart; but cannot admit it as a proof of your point, That people may be full of faith and love, yet have no idea of *CHRIST*'s righteouſneſs.—We would alſo caution you to take heed,

* Mr *Weſley* cannot ſay; What! Teach a doctrine, which I diſapprove! ſince he himſelf has allowed it, has approved it, has ſet his ſeal to it, again and again, in the courſe of theſe his remarks.

heed, leſt, thro' an immoderate fondneſs for increaſing the number of your converts, you are led to deceive yourſelf and others; regiſtering thoſe as real believers, whom the LORD hath not regiſtered. By this means, you may be confirmed in your unſcriptural notion, that the righteous fall away, and the faithful apoſtatize. Whereas, they who fall away, were righteous only in appearance; and they who apoſtatize, were no otherwiſe than profeſſionally faithful. What you ſee drop from the ſky, is not a ſtar, but a meteor only.

Faith is the hand which receives all that is laid up in *CHRIST*.—*Aſpaſio* expreſſes himſelf thus; *CHRIST* is a ſtore-houſe of all good. Whatever is neceſſary to remove our guilt, whatever is expedient for renewing our nature, whatever is proper to fit us for the eternal fruition of GOD, all this is laid up in *CHRIST*. And all this is received by faith, for our application, uſe, and enjoyment.—To this Mr *Weſley* ſubjoins a word of objection; but not in due ſeaſon. *Aſpaſio* is diſplaying the efficacy of faith; Mr *Weſley*'s argument is levelled againſt the indefectibility of faith. However, as it is your favourite objection, it ſhall not be treated as an intruder. "If we *make ſhipwreck of the* "*faith*, how much ſoever is laid up in *CHRIST*, "from that hour we receive nothing."

Have you never heard of the anſwer, which the *Spartan* ſtates returned to an inſolent and barbarous embaſſy from *Philip* of *Macedon*? You may read it in the book you are cenſuring; and may receive it as a reply to this, and your other ſurmiſes of this nature. It was all compriſed in that ſingle monoſyllable IF.—A mere profeſſor may make ſhipwreck of the doctrine of faith; a true believer does not make ſhipwreck of the grace of faith. No, nor ever will, unleſs *CHRIST*'s interceſſion be made of none effect; *I have prayed, that* ſuch *faith fail not*.

265. Anſwered already, in number 261.

Aſpaſio, deſcribing the dreadful nature of the command given to *Abraham*, ſays, Thy hands muſt lift the deadly weapon; thy hands muſt point it to the beloved breaſt; thy own hands muſt urge its way, through the guſhing veins and the ſhivering fleſh, till it be plunged in the throbbing heart.—"Are not "theſe deſcriptions far too ſtrong?" This is ſubmitted to the judgment of the reader. I would only obſerve, that the more ſtrongly the horrors of the tremendous deed are repreſented, the more ſtriking will the difficulty of the duty appear; conſequently the more efficacious and triumphant the power of faith.—"May not theſe deſcriptions occaſion unprofitable "reaſonings in many readers?" What unprofitable reaſonings may be occaſioned, I do not pretend to gueſs. But the juſt and natural reflection, ariſing from the conſideration of ſuch a circumſtance, is; "What "has faith wrought! It purifies and exalts the affec- "tions. It invigorates and ennobles the ſoul; makes "it bold to undertake, and ſtrong to execute, every "great and heroic work. I ſee, therefore, it is not "in vain, that the ſcripture ſo frequently inculcates "faith; lays ſo remarkable a ſtreſs upon faith; and "places it in the very front of all Chriſtian duties." *This is the victory that overcometh the world*, overcometh ſelf, overcometh all things.

How could he (*Abraham*) juſtify it to the world? "Not at all."—True; not to the unbelieving world. They will argue, as Mr *Weſley* on another occaſion, "What! ſtab his ſon, his beſt-beloved, his only ſon to the heart? Could the GOD of goodneſs command ſuch a piece of barbarity? Impoſſible! I could ſooner be a Deiſt, yea, an Atheiſt, than I could believe this. It is leſs abſurd to deny the very being of a GOD, than to make him an almighty tyrant."—But to the believing world, who fear the LORD, and hearken to the voice of his ſervants, *Abraham*'s conduct will never ſtand in need of a vindication. By them it will be highly extolled, and greatly admired. It will be

be an undeniable demonſtration of the reality and ſincerity of his faith; of its very ſuperior elevation, and invincible ſtrength.

You take the direct and certain way to obtain ſubſtantial comfort. The righteouſneſs of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, after which you inquire, about which you are ſolicitous, is a never-failing ſource of conſolation. Thus *Aſpaſio* writes to *Theron*.—"What! without the atonement?" cries Mr *Weſley*. To which he adds, in a following paragraph; "So "the death of CHRIST is not ſo much as named." This puts me in mind of an objection, no very formidable one, made againſt that introductory exhortation to the common prayer, Dearly beloved *brethren*. So then, ſaid a candid examiner, *women* have no part in your worſhip. They are not ſo much as named. But I forbear. If you are not aſhamed of repeating, I am aſhamed of refuting, ſo frequently refuting ſuch an empty cavil. And, I believe, the reader is tired with us both.

286. I have no great objection to your alteration of *Aſpaſio*'s comment. Suppoſe, we compromiſe matters, and conſider the oil poured on *Aaron*'s head, and emptying itſelf from *Zechariah*'s olive-tree, as typical both of the merits and the SPIRIT of CHRIST; which, like light and heat in the ſun, are indiſſolubly connected; or, to make uſe of a ſacred illuſtration, are like the living creatures and the wheels in *Ezekiel*'s viſion. *When the living creatures went, the wheels went by them. When the living creatures were lift up from the earth, the wheels were lift up.* Whitherſoever the former were to go, the latter went alſo.—For the ſake of obliging Mr *Weſley*, I call this a compromiſe. But if he can prevail on himſelf to read the paraphraſe on the two paſſages, without prepoſſeſſion, he will find this aſſociation of ſenſes anticipated by *Aſpaſio*.

Has the law any demand, ſays *Aſpaſio*? It muſt go to CHRIST for ſatisfaction. From which you draw this injurious conſequence, "Then I am not obliged

" to love my neighbour. CHRIST has satisfied " the demand of the law *for me*." This objection has already received an answer.

I shall therefore content myself with shewing, why I call your conclusion injurious. Because, like the deaf adder, it stoppeth the ear against my own explication of my own phrase. A note is added, on purpose to limit its sense, and obviate your misrepresentation. This you totally disregard, and argue as if no such precaution was used.—The note informs you, that the law—the commanding law is satisfied with nothing less than perfect obedience, and the broken law insists upon condign punishment. Now, if it must not, for satisfaction to both these demands, go to *CHRIST* our divine husband, where will it obtain any such thing? who is able to give it, among all the children of *Adam?*

However, lest we offend, needlessly offend any reader, I promise, that, in case the providence of GOD and the favour of the Public call for a new edition, *Aspasio* shall alter his language. Thus the paragraph shall stand; Does the law demand perfect purity of " nature, and perfect obedience of life? It must go " to HIM for satisfaction. Do we want grace, and " glory, and every good gift? We may look to HIM " for a supply; to HIM, *in whom it hath pleased the* " *FATHER, that all fulness should dwell.*"

For all his people—With this phrase Mr *Wesley* is chagrined. This he will not suffer to pass without animadversion. Though he *must* know, if prejudice has not blinded his understanding, that it is pure scripture. Why does he not shew the same dissatisfaction with the angel that appeared unto *Joseph*, and with *Zechariah* the Baptist's father? The former of whom says, He shall save *his people* from their sins. The latter declares, He shall give knowledge of salvation unto *his people*, by the remission of their sins. Why does he not put the same question unto them, and

and draw the ſame inference upon them ? " But what " becomes of *all other people?*"—Sometimes Mr *Weſley* is ſo attached to the ſcriptures, that nothing will pleaſe him, but ſcriptural expreſſions. Here he is ſo wedded to ſelf-opinion, that even ſcriptural expreſſions will not paſs current, when they ſeem to thwart his own notions.

For *all his* people—From this expreſſion, though uſed by a prophet, authorized by an angel, and to be found in many places of ſcripture, Mr *Weſley* deduces ſome very offenſive and dreadful conſequences ; ſo dreadful, that he " would ſooner be a *Turk*, a Deiſt, " yea an Atheiſt, than he could believe them."—My dear Sir, let me give you a word of friendly advice. Before you turn *Turk*, or Deiſt, or Atheiſt—ſee, that you firſt become an *honeſt* man. They will all diſown you, if you go over to their party, deſtitute of common honeſty.

Methinks, I hear you ſaying, with ſome emotion, What do mean by this advice ? or what relation has this to the ſubject of our preſent inquiry ?—A pretty near relation. Out of zeal to demoliſh the doctrine of election, you ſcruple not to overleap the bounds of integrity and truth.—Myſterious ſtill ! I know not what you aim at.—Then be pleaſed to review a paſſage, in your book on *original ſin*, where you have thought proper to make a quotation from my dialogues. It relates to that great doctrine of the goſpel, *CHRIST* becoming the repreſentative and fœderal head of ſinners. Upon this occaſion *Aſpaſio* ſays, " As *Adam* was a public perſon, and acted in the ſtead " of all mankind ; ſo *CHRIST* was a public perſon, " and acted in behalf of *all his people*. As *Adam* was " the firſt general repreſentative of *this kind*, *CHRIST* " was the ſecond and laſt." Here you ſubſtitute the word *mankind*, inſtead of *this kind;* and thereby lead the reader to ſuppoſe, that *Aſpaſio* conſiders our glorious Repreſentative, as ſtanding in this capacity to the

the whole human race; than which nothing can be more injurious to the ſenſe of his words.

I at firſt thought it might poſſibly be the effect of inadvertency. But could a perſon of Mr *Weſley*'s diſcernment allow himſelf to nod over a paſſage, which he knew to be of a critical and controverted import? —Perhaps, it might be the printer's fault; an error of the preſs. I would willingly have admitted one of theſe extenuating circumſtances, till I came to the bottom of the page; where, to my great aſtoniſhment, I found the following words, incloſed within the marks of the ſame quotation, and aſcribed to *Aſpaſio*. "All theſe expreſſions demonſtrate, that *Adam*" (as well as *CHRIST*) "was a repreſentative of *all* "*mankind*." Then I could forbear no longer crying out, *There is treachery, O Ahaziah!* A falſe quotation, not made only, but repeated, cannot be owing to negligence, but muſt proceed from deſign. And this, I ſhould think, can never be defended, no, nor with a good grace excuſed, by Mr *Weſley*'s moſt devoted admirers. A ſtudious alteration of our words, and an evident perverſion of their meaning, are defenſible by no arguments, are excuſable on no occaſion.

Quite inexcuſable this practice. And is not your language equally offenſive? Is not your concluſion very precipitate; when you ſuppoſe *Aſpaſio*, though uſing the words of ſcripture, yet repreſenting GOD as "an almighty tyrant?"—Surely, you had better forbear ſuch horrid and ſhocking expreſſions. Eſpecially, as you cannot deny, that many paſſages in ſcripture ſeem at leaſt to countenance this obnoxious tenet. As you very well know, that many perſons, eminent for their learning and exemplary in their lives, have written in defence of it, and bled for the confirmation of it. As we have proofs more than a few, that you are far from being infallible in your judgment; yea, far from being invariable in your opinion. Witneſs your former notions of matrimony: witneſs

the

the character you formerly gave of the *Moravian* brethren; and the eſteem which you once had for the Myſtics, and their writings.—Conſidering yourſelf, therefore, it would better become you to be diffident on ſuch a ſubject, and ſay, "That which I know not, "LORD, teach thou me." And I imagine, it can never become you, on any ſubject whatever, to break out into ſuch a language, as ought not to be named among Chriſtians; ought to have no place but in the bottomleſs pit.—This is an admonition, which, while I ſuggeſt to you, Sir, I charge on myſelf.

The three following paragraphs relate to a doctrine, which *you* are fond to attack, and which *Aſpaſio* ſtudiouſly declines. It conſtitutes no part of his plan. It forms not ſo much as the out-works. Be it demoliſhed or eſtabliſhed, the grand privilege, and the invaluable bleſſing, of juſtification, through the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, remains unſhaken, ſtands immoveable.—In applying this to ourſelves, we proceed neither upon univerſal nor particular redemption, but only upon the divine grant, and the divine invitation. We aſſure ourſelves of preſent and eternal ſalvation, through this perfect righteouſneſs, not as perſons *elected*, but as perſons *warranted* by the word of GOD; bound by the command of GOD, and *led* by the SPIRIT of GOD.—Therefore, while you are encountering this doctrine, I would be looking unto *JESUS*; be viewing the glory of my LORD; contemplating HIS perfection, and my own completeneſs in HIM.

If I divert, for a moment, from this delightful object, it is only to touch upon one of your remonſtrances. You ſuppoſe, that according to the *Calviniſtic* ſcheme, GOD denies what is neceſſary for preſent comfort and final acceptance, even to ſome who ſincerely ſeek it. This is contrary to ſcripture, and no leſs contrary to the doctrine of your opponents. However, to confirm yourſelf in this miſapprehenſion, you aſk, "Would *you* deny it to any, if it were in *your* "power?"

" power ?"—To ſhew the error of ſuch a ſentiment, and the fallacy of ſuch reaſoning, I ſhall juſt mention a recent melancholy fact.

News is brought, that the *Prince George* man of war, Admiral *Broderick*'s own ſhip, is burnt, and ſunk, and above four hundred ſouls that were on board, are periſhed. Six hours the flames prevailed ; while every means was uſed to preſerve the ſhip and crew, but all to no purpoſe. In the mean time, ſhrieks and groans, bitter moanings, and piercing cries, were heard from every quarter. Raving, deſpair, and even madneſs preſented themſelves, in a variety of forms. Some ran to and fro diſtracted with terror, not knowing what they did, or what they ſhould do. Others jumped over board, from all parts ; and, to avoid the purſuits of one death, leaped into the jaws of another. Thoſe unhappy wretches who could not ſwim, were obliged to remain upon the wreck, though flakes of fire fell on their bodies. Soon the maſts went away, and killed numbers. Thoſe who were not killed, thought themſelves happy, to get upon the floating timber. Nor yet were they ſafe ; for the fire, having communicated itſelf to the guns, which were loaded and ſhotted, they ſwept multitudes from this their laſt refuge.—What ſay you, Sir, to this diſmal narrative ? Does not your heart bleed ? Would you have ſtood by, and denied your ſuccour, if it had been in your power to help ? Would not you have done your utmoſt, to prevent the fatal cataſtrophe ? Yet the LORD ſaw this extreme diſtreſs. He heard their piteous moans. He was able to ſave them, yet withdrew his aſſiſtance. Now, becauſe you would gladly have ſuccoured them if you could, and GOD ALMIGHTY could, but would not ſend them aid ; will you therefore conclude, that *you* are above your LORD, and that *your* loving-kindneſs is greater than his ? I will not offer to charge any ſuch conſe-

quence

quence upon you. I am perſuaded you abhor the thought.

"The wedding-garment here means holineſs."—Thus ſaying, you depart from *Bengelius*, for whom you profeſs ſo high a regard. *Bengelius* overlooks your expoſition, and gives his vote for *Aſpaſio*'s. *Hæc veſtis eſt juſtitia CHRISTI.* Awed by ſo venerable an authority, you have not ventured to exclude this ſenſe from your comment. You have admitted it into your expoſitory notes, yet will not allow *Aſpaſio* to admit it into his diſcourſe with *Theron*. Theſe are your words; "The wedding-garment, that is, the "righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, firſt imputed, then "implanted." Which, by the way, is not perfectly accurate, nor according to the language of the goſpel. The goſpel diſtinguiſhes between the righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*, and our own righteouſneſs. That which is imputed, goes under the former, that which is implanted, under the latter denomination.

However, let us conſider the circumſtances of the caſe, and we ſhall find, that our common favourite *Bengelius* has probability and reaſon on his ſide. The gueſts mentioned in this parable, conſiſted of poor outcaſts, collected from the high-ways and hedges. Now we cannot ſuppoſe, that people in ſuch a condition, and coming at a minute's warning, ſhould be able to furniſh themſelves with a dreſs of *their own*, ſuitable to the grand occaſion. Here then perſonal holineſs is put out of the queſtion.—But we muſt ſuppoſe, (which is conformable to the *Eaſtern* cuſtoms,) that the king had ordered his ſervants, to accommodate each gueſt from the royal wardrobe. That each might have this additional token of his ſovereign's favour, and all might be arrayed in a manner becoming the magnificent ſolemnity. This exactly correſponds with the nature of imputed righteouſneſs.

Farther, the banquet, you will readily allow, is the

pardon of sin, and peace with GOD, the divine SPIRIT, and eternal life. From all which, uniting their happy influence, true holiness springs. To say, that holiness is the wedding-garment, necessary for our introduction to this banquet, savours of absurdity; like saying holiness is necessary to holiness.—It is absolute legality*; for it makes the performance of all duties, the way to the REDEEMER's grace.—It implies an impossibility; the sinner, that can exercise holiness, before he receives *CHRIST* and his SPIRIT, is like the dead man, who arises and walks, before he is restored to life.

The grand end which GOD proposes in all his favourable dispensations to fallen man, is to demonstrate the sovereignty of his grace. "Not so."—Do you mean, *Aspasio* has not spoken so? that you have misrepresented his sense? have clipped and disfigured his coin? If this is your meaning, you speak an undoubted truth. His words are, "To demonstrate the sove-"reignty, and advance the glory of his grace." Why did you suppress the last clause? Was you afraid it would supply the deficiency, which you charge on *Aspasio*, and express the idea of imparting happiness? If so, your fears are just enough.—Why did you not take into consideration those texts of scripture, with which *Aspasio* confirms his tenet? Ought you not to have overthrown those testimonies, before you deny his doctrine? Otherwise, you oppose your own authority, to the decision of a prophet and of an apostle.

"Not so," proceeds Mr *Wesley*. "To impart hap-"piness to his creatures, is his grand end herein."—The devout prophet speaks otherwise; *I have created him for my glory*. The wise moralist speaks otherwise; *The LORD hath created all things for himself*. The holy apostle speaks otherwise; *To the praise of the glory of his grace*. From which, and from innumerable other places of scripture, from the reason of the thing, and from the very nature of the SUPREME BEING,

ING, it appears, that the primary leading aim, in all GOD's works, and all GOD's dispensations, is his own glory. The felicity of his creatures, though not separated from it, though evidently included in it, is still subordinate to it. And surely it is very meet and right so to be. Can there be a nobler end, or more worthy of an infinitely-wise agent, than the display of those sublime perfections, for which, and through which, and to which, are all things? Could GOD make any other being the principal end of his acting, he would *undeify* himself, and give his glory to another. Does any creature imagine his own happiness to be a higher end than the divine glory? He thereby usurps the GODHEAD, making, as far as in him lies, JEHOVAH the subject, and himself the sovereign.

"Barely to demonstrate his sovereignty." The word *barely* is not used by *Aspasio*. But it gives another specimen of Mr *Wesley*'s integrity, in stating truth, and doing justice to his opponents.—It is not said, the *sole*, but the *grand* end. Therefore, would any unprejudised person conclude, there must be some other, tho' inferior purpose? No, says Mr *Wesley;* hence I infer, that it was *barely* to demonstrate his sovereignty. Do you so? Then your inference is of a piece with the quotation, *that* as valid, as *this* is faithful.

"Barely to demonstrate his sovereignty," is a principle of action fit for the great Turk, not for the most high GOD. Such a fraudulent quotation I have not often seen, no, not in the Critical Reviewers. To mark the sentence with commas, and thereby assign it to *Aspasio*, is really a master-piece, especially, after you have thrust in the word *barely*, and lopped off the word *grace*. You have treated the passage worse than *Nahash* king of *Ammon* treated the ambassadors of *David*. They were ashamed to shew their faces, under such marks of abuse and disgrace. I am no less

aſhamed of the clauſe, as you have mangled and diſguiſed it. But reſtore it to its true ſtate; let it wear its native aſpect; then ſee what is blameable, or what is offenſive in it.

The grand end which GOD propoſes in all his favourable diſpenſations to fallen man, is, to demonſtrate the ſovereignty, and advance the glory of his grace.—The *glory*, that it may appear rich, unbounded, and infinitely ſurpaſſing all we can wiſh or imagine.—The *ſovereignty*, that it may appear free, undeſerved, and abſolutely independent on any goodneſs in the creature.—That ſinners may receive it, without waiting for any amiable qualities, or performing any recommending conditions.—That, when received, it may ſtop the mouth of boaſting; may cut off all pretenſions of perſonal merit; and teach every tongue to ſay, *Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy name*, be the praiſe.

And ſhould we not greatly rejoice in this method of the divine procedure? That the LORD orders all things relating to our ſalvation, *to the praiſe of the glory of his grace?* Can any thing be more honourable to our nature, or more tranſporting to our ſouls? Can any thing ſo firmly eſtabliſh, or ſo highly exalt our hopes? Angels, principalities, and powers; all intellectual creatures, in all ages, and all worlds; are to look unto *us*, unto us men they are to look, for the moſt conſummate diſplay of GOD's grace. *Our* exaltation and felicity are to be the mirror, in which the wondering cherubim and ſeraphim will contemplate the ſuperabundant goodneſs of JEHOVAH. How *great* muſt that honour and that happineſs be, which are intended to exhibit the fulleſt, faireſt, brighteſt view of GOD's infinitely-glorious grace! How *ſure* muſt that honour and happineſs be, which are ſo intimately connected with the glory of the omnipotent King! which can no more fail of their accompliſhment, than

than the amiable attributes of GODHEAD can be ſtripped of their luſtre!

GOD is a boundleſs ocean of good. "Nay that "ocean is far from boundleſs, if it wholly paſſes by "nine-tenths of mankind."—What, if it had paſſed by *all* mankind, as it certainly did all the devils, would it have been the leſs boundleſs on that account? I wiſh, methinks, you would ſtudy the evil of ſin more, and not ſo frequently obtrude upon us a ſubject, of which neither you nor I ſeem to be maſters. Then we ſhould neither have hard thoughts of GOD, nor high thoughts of ourſelves.

You cannot ſuppoſe, GOD would enter into a freſh covenant with an *inſolvent* and *attainted* creature *. Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s words. To which Mr *Weſley* replies; "I both ſuppoſe and know he did." *Satis cum imperio.* Then be pleaſed, Sir, to ſhew us *where* the Almighty entered into a covenant with fallen *Adam;* for of him we are ſpeaking. Produce the original deed; at leaſt favour us with a tranſcript. And we will take your word, when it is backed with ſuch authority.

GOD made the new covenant with *CHRIST*, and charged him with the performance of the conditions. "I deny both theſe aſſertions." And what is your reaſon for this denial? Is it deduced from ſcripture? Nothing like it. Is it founded on the nature of things? No attempt is made towards it. But you yourſelf affirm, that theſe aſſertions "are the cen-"tral point, wherein *Calviniſm* and *Antinomianiſm* "meet." Or, in other words, they tend to eſtabliſh what you diſlike, and to overthrow what you have taught. This is all the cauſe which you aſſign for your denial. I cannot but wiſh, that, whenever I engage

* *Inſolvent* and *attainted* creature, Mr *Weſley* has changed into "a rebel."

gage in controverſy, my adverſary may be furniſhed with ſuch arguments.

You deny the aſſertions now. But don't you forget what you allowed and maintained a little while ago; when you yourſelf, adopting a paſſage from *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, called *CHRIST* "a fœderal "head?"—Pray, what is a fœderal head, but a perſon with whom a covenant is made, in behalf of himſelf and others?—Here your judgment was according to truth. Fit, perfectly fit for ſuch an office is *CHRIST*; whoſe life is all his own, who is able to merit, and mighty to ſave. But abſolutely unfit for it, utterly incapable of it, is fallen man; whoſe life is forfeited, whoſe moral ability is loſt, and whoſe very nature is enmity againſt GOD.

I have made a covenant with my choſen.—"Name-"ly, with *David my ſervant*." True; with *David* as in *CHRIST*, or rather as a type of *CHRIST*. You cannot be ignorant, that *CHRIST* is called by this very name. The LORD, ſpeaking by the prophet *Ezekiel*, ſays, *I will ſet up one ſhepherd over them, and he ſhall feed them, even my ſervant David.*—Was *David* beloved * ? *CHRIST* was incomparably more ſo.—Was *David* GOD's choſen one? *CHRIST* was ſo likewiſe, and in a far ſublimer ſenſe, and for infinitely more momentous purpoſes. Was *David* GOD's ſervant? So was *JESUS CHRIST*; and, by his ſervices, brought unſpeakably-greater honour to the LORD his GOD, than all kings on earth, and all the princes of heaven.—Several parts of this pſalm *muſt* be applied to *CHRIST*; and, if ſeveral of them muſt, the principal of them *may* and *ought*.

He will waſh you in the blood which atones, and inveſt you with the righteouſneſs which juſtifies. "Why ſhould you thus put aſunder continually what "GOD has joined?" How difficult is it to pleaſe

Mr

* *Beloved.* This is the meaning of דוד *David*'s name.

Mr *Wesley!* When *Aspasio* spoke of CHRIST's righteousness, without particularly mentioning his blood, you said it was better to mention them both together; it behoved us never to name the former, without the latter. Yet here, when both are mentioned, and the particular use of each is specified, you complain of his putting asunder what GOD has joined; which, in truth, is no disjoining, but an illustration and amplification of the unsearchable riches of CHRIST.

GOD himself, at the last day, pronounces them righteous, because they are interested in the obedience of the REDEEMER. "Rather, because they "are washed in his blood, and renewed by his "SPIRIT." GOD will justify them in the last day, in the very same way whereby he justified them in this world; namely, because they are interested in the obedience of the REDEEMER. As for their renewal by the SPIRIT, though it will then be perfect, yet it will be no cause of their acquittal, but the privilege of those who are acquitted.—A proof of this, at least an attestation of it, the world has received from your own pen. "For neither our own in-"ward nor outward righteousness is the ground "of our justification. Holiness of heart, as well as "holiness of life, is not the cause, but the effect of "it. The *sole* cause of our acceptance with GOD, "is the righteousness and death of CHRIST, who "fulfilled GOD's law, and died in our stead." Excellent sentiments! In these may I ever abide! to these may you also return!

The

The practical improvement of the doctrine of a ſinner's juſtification by the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, taken from a little piece, entitled, A DISCOURSE UPON JUSTIFICATION, printed at London in 1740, which Mr HERVEY highly eſteemed, and warmly recommended.

Being no improper ſupplement to the doctrine contained in THERON and ASPASIO, and ASPASIO VINDICATED.

1. SINCE the *juſtification* of a ſinner is by the complete *obedience* of Jeſus Chriſt, *imputed* to him, and received by *faith*, unto ſuch great and glorious *effects;* we may hence learn, what reaſon we have to *admire* that infinity of *wiſdom*, which ſhines forth in the *contrivance* of this wonder; and to adore that immenſity of *grace*, which is diſplayed in this glorious *proviſion* made for the favourites of heaven! When the beloved *John* was favoured with a viſionary ſight of the *woman-bride*, *the Lamb's wife*, as *clothed with* Chriſt, *the Son* of Righteouſneſs, and ſhining forth in the reſplendent rays of her Bridegroom's glory; he ſays, he ſaw *a* WONDER, *Rev.* xii. 1. And a wonder it is indeed; ſo great, that it calls for the admiration, both of men, and of angels. This is one of thoſe glorious *things*, that by the goſpel is revealed unto us, *which the angels deſire to look into*, 1 *Pet.* i. 12. And while ſinful men have *the forgiveneſs* of their *ſins through* Chriſt's *blood*, and the *acceptation* of their *perſons* in him, *the Beloved*, *according to the riches of* the Father's *grace*, *wherein he has abounded towards* them, *in all wiſdom and prudence;* it becomes them to admire and adore the ſame, and to cry out, with the apoſtle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wiſdom and*

and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Eph. i. 6, 7, 8. Rom. xi. 33. That the *obedience* of the Son of God should be made our *righteousness*, the righteousness of a *sinner*, to his complete *justification* before God, is such a *project* of infinite *wisdom*, such a *provision* of infinite *grace*, for the *salvation* of God's chosen, that every way becomes the great JEHOVAH! and will be the endless wonder of men and angels!

2. Since the justification of a sinner is wholly by the righteousness of another, which is a *way of life above* nature, above being discovered by nature's *light*, and seem by nature's *eye*, or discovered by the light of the *law*, and discerned by natural *reason;* we may learn hence, what an absolute necessity there is of a supernatural *revelation* thereof, in order to the soul's receiving of this *righteousness*, and so of the grace of *justification* thereby. This is one of these *things* that God has *prepared* for his people, that never *entered into the heart of* the natural *man to conceive of*, which he has neither *known*, nor *can* understand; and therefore deems it *foolishness*, or a foolish thing, for any to think they shall be justified by the obedience of Christ, exclusive of all their own works. But the people of God "receive not the Spirit which is of the world, "but the Spirit which is of God, that they may know "the things which are freely given *them* of God." And *this*, of *the free gift of righteousness*, *is revealed unto* them by his *Spirit*, though it is one of those *deep things of God*, which are hidden from the *natural man;* which are impossible to be known by any, but heaven-born souls, under a special *revelation* from above, 1 *Cor.* ii. 9. *&c.*

3. Since the *justification* of a sinner is by the *obedience* of Christ alone; we may hence learn, how greatly *important* the *knowledge* thereof is! The *knowledge* of this righteousness must needs be of the utmost *importance*, since *ignorance* of it, and *non-submission*

to it, (which always go together,) leave the soul in an *unrighteous* state, *Rom.* ix. 31, 32. and x. 3. All those miserable souls, who are *ignorant* of Christ's *righteousness*, *go about to establish their own righteousness*; and, alas! *the bed is shorter, than that a man can stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower, than that he can wrap himself in it*, Is. xxviii. 20. There is no true *rest* for a *sinner*, from the *works* of its own hands; no *covering* for a *naked* soul, from the *fig-leaves* of its own *righteousness*, though ever so artfully sewed together. Our Lord told his *disciples*, that *except* their *righteousness did exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, they should in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven*, Matth. v. 20. These *scribes* and *Pharisees* were the *zealous*, the *religious* men of that *age*, the strict observers of *Moses*'s law, that trusted in *themselves*, that they were *righteous*, by their own *legal* performances, and thought to get to *heaven* by means thereof. But our Lord declares, that none shall ever come *there*, but those who have a *better* righteousness, a *righteousness* that exceeds a *Pharisaical* righteousness, *i. e.* such a righteousness that every way answers to all the extensive requirements of the *law*, in heart, lip, and life; and this is no other than the *righteousness* of Christ, imputed to poor *sinners*, or made *theirs* by *imputation;* in which, being completely *justified*, according to *law* and *justice*, they shall, as *righteous* persons, be admitted into the kingdom of *heaven*, or into the glory of the heavenly *state;* while all others who trust in their own *righteousness*, and think they have done *many wonderful works*, which they dare plead for acceptance with God, shall be sent away from Christ, into eternal *misery*, with a *Depart from me, ye workers of iniquity*, Mat. vii. 22.

And as our Lord, in this his *sermon* upon the *mount*, had been expounding the law of God, in its *spirituality*, as extending to the *heart*, as well as *life;* and asserting the necessity of *keeping* the commandments, in

in the ſame extenſive manner that the law *required*, in order to make a perſon *righteous*; ſo, in the concluſion thereof, he ſays, "Therefore whoſoever hear-"eth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them, I will li-"ken him unto a wiſe man, who built his houſe up-"on a rock; and the rain deſcended, and the floods "came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that "houſe; and it fell not, for it was founded upon a "rock, *ver.* 24, 25." Theſe *ſayings* of our Lord contain the *ſubſtance* of the moral *law*, and the *doing* of them unto *righteouſneſs* before God is by *believing*; as faith lays hold on Chriſt, who has *obeyed* the law perfectly, as the *repreſentative* of his people: on which account, *they* may be ſaid to have done, or *fulfilled* the law in him; his *obedience* being *imputed* unto *them*, for their complete *juſtification* before God. As the *ſurety's payment*, among men, is accounted to the *debtor*, and is the ſame, in the eye of the *law*, and as effectual for his full *diſcharge*, as if he himſelf had paid the *debt*. And he that thus *doth* the law, or theſe *ſayings* of Chriſt, he *likens* him *unto a wiſe man, who built his houſe upon a rock*. It is a piece of natural *wiſdom*, to lay a good *foundation* for a ſtately *ſtructure*; and the moſt *firm* that any houſe can be built on, is that of a *rock*. And he that is ſpiritually *wiſe*, *wiſe unto ſalvation*, lays the whole *ſtreſs* of it, and builds all his *hope* of life, upon *Chriſt*, the *Rock* of ages; in which it appears, that he is *wiſe* indeed. For as in nature, a *houſe* that is built upon a *rock*, will ſtand the *ſtorm*; ſo the *ſoul* that is built upon *Chriſt*, ſhall never be *removed: The rain may deſcend, the floods come, and the winds beat*; afflictions, temptations, and trials of all kinds, may *beat vehemently againſt* that ſoul; but ſhall never *deſtroy* its *ſalvation*, nor make it *aſhamed* of its *hope*. No; Chriſt, the *Rock* of immutability, will hold it *unſhaken*, in a ſtate of *ſalvation*, through *life*, thro' *death*, at *judgment*, and for *ever*. Such a ſoul *ſtands* as *immovable*, in the grace of *juſtification*, and *life*, as the *rock* itſelf, on which it is founded. *Becauſe I*

live, ſaith our Lord, *ye ſhall live alſo*, John xiv. 19. Chriſt's *life* is the life of that *ſoul*, that depends upon him alone, for all its juſtification, and eternal ſalvation. And therefore the *wiſdom* of faith is great indeed! in that it foreſees the ſtorm, and thus provides againſt it.

But he, ſaith our Lord, *that heareth theſe ſayings of mine, and doth them not*, (*i. e.* that *heareth* the law's *requirements*, and endeavours to *obey* the ſame, for *righteouſneſs* before God, and ſo doth them *not*; becauſe his obedience cannot come up to that perfection which the law requires,) " ſhall be likened unto a " fooliſh man, which built his houſe upon the ſand; " and the rain deſcended, and the floods came, and " the winds blew, and beat upon that houſe; and it " fell, and great was the fall of it," *ver.* 26, 27. Oh, the *folly* of that poor ſinner, who lays the *ſtreſs* of his ſalvation, and builds his *hope* of life, upon his *own* righteouſneſs! For this *ſandy* foundation cannot endure the *ſtorms* of divine *wrath*, which ſhall be revealed from heaven againſt all unrighteouſneſs of men; nor ſecure the ſoul from being driven away, by the tempeſt of God's *anger*, and the floods of his *indignation*, into the abyſs of eternal *miſery*. The *houſe fell*, that was thus *built* upon the *ſand*, *and great was the fall of it!* Oh, what a miſerable diſappointment will it be to that ſoul, that " goes down to the chambers " of *eternal* death, with this lie of his own righteouſ- " neſs in his right hand;" from which he had all along hoped for eternal life! when this *way that ſeemed right to him in his own eyes*, as if it would lead him to everlaſting life, (by his *depending* thereon,) ſhall *end* in eternal *death! The hope of the hypocrite* (or of him that truſts in himſelf, that he is righteous, by his own external performances, when yet his heart is far from that conformity to God, which the law *requires*) *ſhall periſh at the giving up of the ghoſt. His hope* (i. e. his *ſalvation* hoped for) *ſhall* then *be cut off. He ſhall lean upon his houſe*, (i. e. his own *righteouſneſs*, which

which he had raiſed up, in his imagination, to *ſhelter* him from the *ſtorm* of divine vengeance,) "but it ſhall "not ſtand; he ſhall hold it faſt, but it ſhall not en-"dure, *Job* viii. 13, 14, 15. No, this *houſe* of his ſhall be as ſoon deſtroyed, by the ſtorm of God's indignation, as a *ſpider's web* is ſwept down, by the beſom that comes againſt it; and the miſerable ſoul, that truſted herein, ſhall be driven away into eternal perdition. Thus an error in the *foundation* will prove *fatal* to the building; and therefore the *knowledge* of *Chriſt*, as the alone way of a ſinner's *juſtification*, and *life*, muſt need be of the higheſt *importance;* ſince no other *refuge* can ſtand the *ſtorm*, but Chriſt, as THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS, this glorious *hiding-place*, which God has prepared for poor ſinners, whither they may *run*, and be for ever *ſafe*. And as for *thoſe* who live and die in *ignorance* of, and *non-ſubmiſſion to* the righteouſneſs of Chriſt, they will certainly *die in their ſins*, and *periſh* for ever. They will all be found *filthy*, at the day of judgment, that have not been enabled to *believe* in Chriſt's *blood*, for cleanſing from all ſin; they will all be found *unjuſt*, at that awful day, that have not *believed* in the Redeemer's *righteouſneſs*, for their juſtification before God; and ſo muſt remain for *ever*. For concerning them, it will then be ſaid, "He that is filthy, let him be filthy "ſtill; and he that is unjuſt, let him be unjuſt ſtill;" *i. e.* let him *abide* ſo, to an endleſs *eternity*. But,

4. Since there is but one *way* for a ſinner to be *juſtified* before God, and that is by the *obedience* of Chriſt alone; this informs us, what great *folly* thoſe perſons are guilty of, who *preſs* poor ſinners to obey the *law*, to make themſelves *righteous* in the ſight of God, when there is no law given that can give life unto them; and how *dangerous* it is for ſouls, to ſit under ſuch a miniſtry, that naturally *miſleads* them; ſince while "the blind leads the blind, both fall into the ditch. If "there had been a law given that could have given "life,"

" life," ſays the apoſtle, " verily righteouſneſs ſhould " have been by the law," *Gal.* iii. 21. But as there is no law given that can give life to a ſinner, it is a *vain*, *fooliſh* thing to *preſs* ſuch a ſoul, to get a *righteouſneſs* by his own *performances*, which was never appointed of God, nor can be *attained* by man: No; *the ſcripture hath concluded all under ſin, that the promiſe* (of life) *by faith of Jeſus Chriſt* (as a ſinner's righteouſneſs) *might be given to them that believe*, ver. 22. And thoſe who receive it not in this *way*, ſhall never attain it in any *other*, but muſt go *without* it for ever. *The labour of the fooliſh*, ſays the wiſe man, *wearieth every one of them, becauſe he knoweth not how to go to the city*, Eccleſ. x. 15. A man may labour all his *days*, to make himſelf *righteous* before God, by his own *performances*, and to make his *peace* with him, by his *legal* repentance, and humiliation for *ſin;* and yet *loſe* all his labour at *laſt*, and ſo weary himſelf in *vain*, being never able to reach that *city*, that eternal reſt, which God has prepared for his people: becauſe he *knoweth* not *Chriſt*, the only *way* that leads thither; and ſo *walks* not by faith, in him, as ſuch. All men by nature are ignorant of Chriſt's *righteouſneſs*, as it is God's *way* of *juſtifying* and *ſaving* a ſinner; and it is *dangerous* for ſouls, to ſit under ſuch a miniſtry, that preſſeth *doing*, and perſuades them their *ſafety* lies there, inſtead of *believing*. " For how ſhall they be- " lieve," ſaith the apoſtle, " in him of whom they " have not heard? And how ſhall they hear without " a preacher? And how ſhall they preach except they " be ſent?" *Rom.* x. 14, 15. How ſhall poor ſouls *believe* in Chriſt for *juſtification*, when they have never *heard* of his *righteouſneſs*, which is the proper *object* of faith? And how ſhall they *hear*, without a *preacher* of that goſpel that declares it? And how ſhall they *preach* the goſpel to others, who have never *ſeen* that ſalvation it reveals for ſinners, by the *righteouſneſs* of Chriſt, themſelves? How ſhall they declare the glory and efficacy thereof to *others*, that have never

never ſeen, nor experienced it *themſelves?* And how does it appear, that they are *ſent* by Chriſt, to preach the goſpel, who neither *know*, nor *proclaim* his *righteouſneſs*, for the *juſtification* of a ſinner; which is ſuch a main *doctrine* thereof? Have we not reaſon to fear, that many of thoſe who are called *miniſters* of the *goſpel*, are rather *preachers* of *Moſes*, than of *Chriſt?* and that their *miniſtry* rather tends to lead ſouls to the bondage and death of the *law*, than to the liberty and life of the *goſpel?* But "how beautiful are the feet "of them that preach the goſpel of peace, that bring "glad tidings of good things!" that publiſh that *peace* with God, which was made for ſinners alone, by the *blood* of Chriſt's croſs; and is poſſeſſed only by *faith*, in him! that proclaim the glad tidings of thoſe good things, which God has prepared, to be enjoyed by *ſinners*, through the juſtifying *righteouſneſs* of his Son! And how great is the privilege of thoſe ſouls, who ſit under a *goſpel*-miniſtry; ſince this is the *means* appointed of God, to work *faith* in them, and to bring *ſalvation* to them! Once more.

5. Since the *juſtification* of a ſinner is by the *righteouſneſs* of Chriſt, *imputed* to him, and received by *faith* alone; we may hence learn, how great the *obligation* of the *juſtified* ones is, to *live* to the *glory* of that *grace*, which has ſo freely and fully *juſtified* them, in and through Chriſt, unto eternal *life*, by him! When the apoſtle had aſſerted the juſtification and ſalvation of God's people, both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, to be wholly of his free *mercy*, in and through Chriſt, *Rom.* xi. 32. and admired the riches of his *wiſdom*, which was ſo brightly diſplayed in the diſpenſations of his *mercy* towards him, *ver.* 33. he thus concludes his diſcourſe, *ver.* 36. "For of him, and through him, "and to him are all things; to whom be glory for "ever," *Amen.* 'Tis as if he ſhould ſay, Since all things, relating to the juſtification and ſalvation of God's people, are *of* him, and *through* him, it is meet that

that the glory of all ſhould, by them, be given *to* him. And therefore, when he applies this doctrine of God's free mercy in Chriſt, to them who had obtained it, he thus addreſſeth them, *chap.* xii. 1. "I beſeech you "therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye "preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, accept- "able unto God, which is your reaſonable ſervice." I beſeech [*you*,] ſays he, *you* that have obtained *mercy*, [*therefore*,] or ſince it is God's deſign, to *glorify* his mercy, in the ſalvation of ſinners, that you give him the *glory* of it; [*by the mercies of God*,] thoſe *mercies* of God, which you are partakers of, in the *forgiveneſs* of all your *ſins*, and in the *juſtification* of your *perſons*; [*that ye preſent your bodies a living ſacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God*,] that ye continually offer up yourſelves, as a whole burnt-offering, in the flames of *love*, unto him that hath *loved* you, in all holy and acceptable *obedience*, to the *glory* of that God, who has thus had *mercy* upon you; [*which is your reaſonable ſervice.*] For it is a moſt reaſonable thing, or a thing for which there is the higheſt *reaſon*, that you ſhould ever *ſerve* the Lord, to the *glory* of that *grace*, by which you are freely *juſtified*, and ſhall be eternally *glorified*. And thus, the apoſtle *Peter*, 1 *Pet.* ii. 9. "But ye are a choſen generation, a royal prieſthood," (who are waſhed from all your ſins in Chriſt's blood, and clothed with his righteouſneſs,) "an holy nation, "a peculiar people; that ye ſhould ſhew forth the "praiſes of him who hath called you out of darkneſs, "into his marvellous light." *And*, "you know," ſays the apoſtle *Paul*, "how we exhorted and comforted, "and charged every one of you, (*i. e.* of you juſti- "fied, ſaved ones,) that ye would walk worthy of God, "who hath called you unto his kingdom and glory." 1 *Theſſ.* ii. 11, 12. And in ſhort, as it was God's deſign to get himſelf *glory* in the *juſtification* of ſinners, by the *righteouſneſs* of Jeſus Chriſt; ſo the *diſplay* thereof, throughout the whole goſpel, lays *them* under the higheſt *obligation* to *live* to his *praiſe*. Does God the

Father

Father impute the *obedience* of his Son to poor sinners? did God the *Son obey* in *life* and in *death* for them? and does God the *Spirit reveal* and *apply* this *righteousness* to them; and enable them to *receive* the same, as a *free gift* of grace, unto their eternal *life* in glory? What thanks, what praise, is due to God, in each of his glorious persons, for this abundant grace! And let the language of the justified ones, in heart, lip, and life, in all kind of holy *obedience*, both now and always be, *Thanks be unto God, for the grace of* JUSTIFICATION! *for this his unspeakable* GIFT! 2 Cor. ix. 15. *Amen! Hallelujah!*

A

DEFENCE

OF

THERON and *ASPASIO*,

AGAINST THE

Objections contained in a late Treatise, entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio.*

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED,

A series of Letters from Mr HERVEY, to the Author, authenticating this Defence with his entire approbation, and manifesting it to be the only one that can be presented to the public with that authority.

PREFACE.

THE intention of prefixing Mr *Hervey*'s letters to this *reply*, is, in fact, to recommend it to the attention of the public, as such a farther explication and defence of *Theron* and *Aspasio*, as was quite agreeable to his own judgment; such as (in substance) would have appeared in the world, in his elegant and entertaining manner of address, had it pleased the Sovereign Disposer of all events to have continued him in life and such as the present situation of his writings require.

It has been already remarked in the public intimation of printing Mr *Hervey*'s letters, that "when writers of a distin-

" guiſhed ſuperiority have gained our admiration and applauſe, " we are fond of penetrating into their more retired apart- " ments, and aſſociating with them in the ſequeſtered walks of " private life." A curioſity of this nature cannot be more *uſefully* gratified; we cannot be uſhered into Mr *Hervey*'s company to better purpoſe, than to hear him declare what he himſelf counted moſt valuable in all his writings; that which was his main deſign, and to which he would have his readers continually advert; thoſe ſentiments, which (as he expreſſes it in one of his letters) " I wiſh to have written on my heart; " ſuch as I wiſh to ſpeak and teach while I live; and in my " writings (if my writings ſurvive me) to teſtify when I am " dead." More eſpecially, if what he ſo eſteemed is the doctrine of our Lord and his apoſtles, otherwiſe Mr *Hervey*'s eſteem will be but of ſmall account.

It ſeems the more neceſſary that he ſhould thus be made to ſpeak for himſelf, ſince ſome who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves as his peculiar friends, and as very angry with Mr *Sandeman* in his behalf, are at the ſame time very likely to be no friends to his defence. The reaſon is, whatever may be the motive for their profeſſed regard, they have for many years paſt, and do unto this day, manifeſt great ignorance, if not great enmity, in reſpect of the principles which formed and influenced Mr *Hervey*'s faith and practice; and on which he ventured his eternal concerns; ſtigmatizing, or, I ſhould rather ſay, honouring them, with the ſame kind of reproaches as the ancient oppoſers of Chriſtianity caſt upon our Lord and his diſciples. Perhaps it may awaken the attention of ſome to inquire of the unerring oracles, *What is truth?* when they find, by theſe letters, that there is no dependence to be placed elſewhere; and that thoſe in whom they have truſted as ſpiritual guides, applaud, or cenſure, with very little judgment, or with a worſe deſign.

After all, I am not ſo ſanguine in my expectation, as to think that by this, or any other method, the deſpiſed truth of the goſpel will prevail with many, againſt the ſtream of the reputed devout and highly eſteemed of this world. We muſt remember the treatment which our Lord and his diſciples met with; and as the world is not better now than it was in thoſe days, we have little reaſon to expect better ſucceſs.

Mr *Hervey* began to find he had been in a miſtake in this reſpect, and would have publicly acknowledged as much, had he lived but a few months longer. He began to be acquainted with

with that true grace of God, which is contrary to the courſe of this world, in its devouteſt form, for upwards of twelve years before our correſpondence commenced. He was willing to recommend it to their conſideration, and (if poſſible) make it appear lovely to their view. He dreſſed it up with all the beauties of eloquence, and all the winning arts of perſuaſion. He concealed whatever he thought might give his readers diſguſt and even intreated his friend to conceal their correſpondence for the preſent, leſt the power of prejudice (raiſed by his profeſſed friends) ſhould prevent them from looking into his books: and all this in hopes to prevail, and give the deſpiſed goſpel of Jeſus a recommending appearance in their eyes. But alas! he died before he had accompliſhed this deſign; and perhaps, had he lived to the age of *Methuſelah*, he would never have brought it to paſs. So that we can only look upon this as his fervent deſire, that the important truth, in which he had found all he wanted, ſhould be as great a bleſſing to others as it had been to him. He gained a return of compliment for his favourable ſentiments and kind behaviour, but it was in vain for him to expect to prevail any farther.

His notion was, as he himſelf expreſſes it, that "the taſte "of the preſent age is ſomewhat like the humour of children, "their milk muſt be ſugared, their wine ſpiced, and their ne- "ceſſary food garniſhed with flowers and enriched with ſweet- "meats." His deſire that what he called his *principal point* might be, if poſſible, made thus palatable, engaged him in ſeveral correſpondencies, ſuited to the embelliſhment of his works; his ſuperiority as a writer, cauſed many to covet an acquaintance and friendſhip with him; and his tender and complaiſant behaviour, even to thoſe who differed, gave ſome of them hopes of prevailing with him, or by him, to advance their own various and oppoſite ſentiments. Filled with theſe hopes, their behaviour towards him was accordingly reſpectful; which, together with his retired ſituation in life, prevented him, in a great meaſure, from diſcerning their enmity to his principles. Taking it for granted they meant as they ſpake, he judged them aiming to promote the ſame important cauſe. Had this been fact, they would have ſtill merited the regard he paid them; their profeſſed zeal would have been commendable, had it been ſubſervient to the *true grace of God* for which he pleaded; but bears as different an aſpect when their enmity and oppoſition thereto is diſcovered; even as

Paul's

Paul's moſt hardened wickedneſs, was to the piety and zeal of his Phariſaic ſtate.

No ſooner was he dead than conſultations were on foot, tending to bury his principles as well as him. His private letters were publicly advertiſed for, in order to be printed; which by the uſe made of them, ſeems not done with any deſign to eſtabliſh the truths he contended for, but to pick out, if poſſible, ſomething to their diſadvantage; and, what is ſtill more unworthy, to eſtabliſh their own characters in ſuch attempts on the encomiums he had at one time or other beſtowed on them, for want of ſeeing them properly; for want of knowing that their ruling principle was a fixed enmity to that goſpel which was his ſole delight. Beſides this, ſeveral reports were ſpread, detrimental to the important truth he had ſo contended for. And knowing that all and every one of them could be fully diſproved by Mr *Hervey*'s own hand-writing, I counted it my duty to print the defence, and to publiſh the letters to the author to authenticate it with Mr *Hervey*'s approbation. Though I was apprehenſive, at the ſame time, it might carry the appearance of oſtentation, to ſuch as did not know what was in hand, and ſo could not be ſenſible that the ſupport of the important truth, which ſhines through all his works, depended, in ſome meaſure, on the publication of theſe letters.

Notwithſtanding all this, the perſons concerned in the publication of two volumes, under the title of *The letters of the late Rev. Mr James Hervey*, have exerted themſelves, with uncommon boldneſs, in diſfiguring his principles; and, at the ſame time, introduce their own. This is evidently manifeſt from ſeveral notes annexed to theſe letters *. In theſe volumes they have inſinuated that the author of the defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* was "on the *Antinomian* ſide of the queſtion, and that "Mr *Hervey* by no means approved of his ſentiments." Upon this there immediately appeared in the *Gazetteer*, *Aug.* 22. and *London Chronicle*, *Aug.* 26. a letter to the editor and publiſher of theſe volumes, ſignifying the ſhocking appearance of ſlander and detraction in volumes under the name of a man ſo averſe to ſuch proceedings; and proving, from Mr *Hervey*'s own words, the moſt apparent falſehood in their aſſertions; there being no letter in the whole two volumes, ſo expreſſive of *ſameneſs of ſentiment*, as the letters to the author of the defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*; and concluding with theſe words, "The ſecret ſtabs that are given to characters, by "modern

* All theſe notes are thrown out of this edition of our author's works.

" modern pretenders to piety, would make a court of juſtice " bluſh. And I am perſuaded the real friends to Mr *Hervey*'s " memory, or writings, will not be pleaſed to find his name " made ſubſervient to ſuch baſe purpoſes." The proceedings are a little more open in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for *Auguſt*; where we are told, that Mr *Hervey* himſelf " is by no means " free of the charge of ſtretching the principles of *Calvin* in- " to *Antinomianiſm*," p. 379. It is very evident Mr *Hervey* concerned himſelf with no *Calviniſtical* or *Arminian* diſputes. In one of his letters, ſpeaking of Mr *W——y*'s conduct, he ſays, " I am ſometimes apprehenſive that he would draw me " into a diſpute about particular redemption; I know he can " ſay ſtartling and horrid things on this ſubject; and this, per- " haps, might be the moſt effectual method to prejudiſe peo- " ple againſt my *principal point*."

As to the charge of *Antinomianiſm*, unleſs the particular errors are pointed out, (which may as well be done without the aſſiſtance of reproachful names,) it is no more than a very vague uncertain ſound, made uſe of by ſome leaders in the various claſſes of religious people as a political bugbear, whereby they diſguiſe and disfigure the party they intend to reproach *. It is a term not confined to any dictionary-interpretation,

* When theſe religious politicians have raiſed an alarm, *Beware of the Antinomians!* the ignorant multitude are upon the inquiry to know, what this dreadful thing called *Antinomianiſm* is; they are told a hundred bugbear tales of monſters in human ſhape: when they inquire farther who are *Antinomians*, meaning who are the perſons ſo abandoned as to hold ſuch dreadful opinions or practices, they have nothing more to do, than to place the name upon whom they pleaſe; and it follows of courſe, by this artful ſhift, that the credulous and deceived multitude believe the perſons, ſo pointed out, to be guilty of whatever has been charged under that name. Were it not for this piece of artifice, they might perhaps be obliged, honeſtly and fairly, to point out the particular errors of thoſe they diſlike and accuſe; and, in ſo doing, might manifeſt, that they themſelves know not what they ſay, nor whereof they affirm.

Mr *Hervey* has very properly exhibited ſuch vain declaimers in the following note:

" This puts me in mind of what *Theodorus* replied to *Philocles*; " who was often inſinuating, that he preached *licentious* doctrine; " becauſe he enlarged, with peculiar aſſiduity, upon faith in JE- " SUS CHRIST; and frequently choſe ſuch texts as, *Believe in* " *the Lord Jeſus, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.*"

" I preach ſalvation by JESUS CHRIST; and give me leave " to aſk, whether you know what ſalvation by CHRIST means?

Philocles

pretation, but admits of a variety of definitions, according to the various ſentiments of the perſons who uſe it, from the moſt profeſſed preachers of Chriſt, down to the *Monthly Reviewers*, who eſteem no better of any that concern themſelves with the name of Jeſus, farther than what becomes a decent complaiſance to the profeſſion of their country. Theſe gentlemen can read the Bible as well as theſe volumes, "without "the leaſt intellectual improvement" in the doctrine of Chriſt; and can alſo give a ſolid reaſon for it, *viz.* that they have no taſte for this kind of reading; it is very diſagreeable to them. They judge, "that one virtuous deſign promoted, one good "action done, or one bad habit ſubdued, is worth more than "all ſuch trifling conſiderations" as the death and reſurrection of Jeſus. The ſcripture-language concerning ſalvation only by Chriſt muſt be *Antinomianiſm* in their eſteem. They expect to be ſaved in doing well; and the ſcripture aſſures them, that *if they do well, they ſhall be accepted.* Our Saviour declares, he never came to interrupt ſuch people in their good intentions; but to ſave the loſt, and worthleſs, ſuch as ought to periſh, according to every rule of equity; and the real goſpel of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt will ever prove *fooliſhneſs*, a *ſtone of ſtumbling*, and *rock of offence*, to any but theſe ſort of people.

Any one who has read the letters on *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, or ever ſeen Mr *Hervey*'s ſentiments of that author, will eaſily perceive that a reply to that performance was abſolutely neceſſary, or elſe, as he obſerves in one of his letters, "what is "not confuted by argument, is confirmed by ſilence." It was alſo

"*Philocles* pauſed; he began to bluſh; would have eluded the queſ-"tion, and declined an anſwer. No, ſaid *Theodorus*, you muſt per-"mit me to inſiſt upon a reply. Becauſe, if it be a *right* one, it "will juſtify me and my conduct: if it be a *wrong* one, it will "prove, that you blame you know not what; and have more rea-"ſon to inform yourſelf, than to cenſure others.

"This diſconcerted him ſtill more. Upon which *Theodorus* pro-"ceeded: Salvation by CHRIST means, not only a deliverance "from the *guilt*, but alſo from the *power* of ſin. He gave himſelf "for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity; *redeem us from "our vain converſation*, as well as deliver us from the wrath to "come.—Go now, *Philocles*, and tell the world, that by teaching "theſe doctrines, I promote the cauſe of licentiouſneſs. And you "will be juſt as *rational*, juſt as *candid*, juſt as *true*, as if you ſhould "affirm, that the firemen, by playing the engine, and pouring in "water, burnt your houſe to the ground, and laid your furniture "in aſhes." *Note*, vol. II. dial. x. p. 357.

also necessary, if possible, that this defence should be by himself, or by his approbation; and also that the public should be ascertained of this, that so it may be considered as a proper and necessary supplement to his volumes. As these particulars can be so plainly discovered by the letters prefixed, it is well that Mr *Hervey* was so open in his declarations.

As to our debate with Mr *Sandeman*, it seems to stand as follows:

The turning-point from despair to good hope, he observes, is the hinge of the controversy; and this point is with Mr *Sandeman* the finished work of Christ, as it is fully sufficient to vindicate the divine justice in saving the most guilty. All the hope he has by this, is represented by the hope of a man has from hearing of the plentiful importation of corn in the time of famine; while it yet remains a hazard whether he shall ever obtain any; and his expectation to obtain, is by labouring in painful desire and fear till crowned with enjoyment.

Aspasio's turning point is the finished work of Christ, revealed in the gracious declarations of the gospel, not only as supporting the divine justice in saving the most guilty, but also as the sufficient object of the sinner's immediate trust and confidence, agreeable to the repeated divine assurances that such shall not be confounded or disappointed. And the works and labour of love *Aspasio* pleads for, are works of love to God thus manifested and trusted in.

Aspasio's former opponents have objected to this immediate trust of a sinner upon Christ alone for everlasting life by pleading for what they have conceived to be previously necessary, under the names of faith, repentance, sanctification begun, *&c.*

Mr *Sandeman* has undertook to prove, that all true sanctification, conversion, faith, *&c.* springs solely from the truth of Christ's sufficiency for the most guilty, without any addition whatever, as the central point of divine revelation, and that all other religion is not any part of Christianity; not any part of that doctrine which came from heaven; but only the vain efforts of the natural man to lower the divine character of the infinitely righteous and just God, and quiet his guilty conscience with a righteousness insufficient, or, in other words, a righteousness stained with sin; and that the names of conversion, faith, sanctification, applied to this kind of religion, are only fitted to deceive; and supposing our appropriation of trust to be a denial of this sufficiency of Christ alone, he opposes that also. This then is what we are concerned to defend.

To

To this purpose I have endeavoured to shew, that, in trusting to the sufficient righteousness of Christ alone for everlasting life, we keep clear of the charge of denying the sufficient righteousness, and of adding or mixing another righteousness with it. We may rather ask, How does it appear that any man believes it to be sufficient, when he dare not trust his soul upon it, but waits in painful desire and fear, to discover himself possessed of the distinguishing qualities of a believer? And as he carefully separates what he believes, from all foundation of hope or confidence therein for everlasting life, he appears to us involved in the absurdity of hoping for eternal life by Christ, because he discovers himself without any foundation of hope, either in himself, or in the gospel he believes.

He may say, "he trusts to be saved by what Christ has "done, if saved at all;" but that very *if* signifies, that he does not trust upon what Christ has done, but is waiting to discover something else as a more proper ground of his confidence. And what is that *something else*, but the difference he discovers betwixt himself and other sinners? So that after all our flourishes against self-dependence and Pharisaic doctrine, if we are not upon our guard, we shall be at last settled on no other foundation.

Mr *Sandeman*, in endeavouring to prove that his view of the gospel "quiets the guilty conscience of a man as soon as "he knows it," acknowledges with us, that the gospel is designed for that end; but fails in his attempt to make out, that the guilty conscience of that man is quieted who discovers no foundation in what he believes, to trust in Christ's righteousness for everlasting life. He supposes, that the uneasiness and dread of conscience arises only from the appearing impossibility of a just God being a Saviour; from whence he infers, that the revelation of a righteousness removing this seeming impossibility, brings the rest and peace the scripture speaks of; without revealing any ground for trust and confidence in that righteousness. But this supposition is not true; few or none are troubled with such apprehensions, nor does the scripture address men as though they were. It is self-evident, that the cause of our dread is an apprehension of *our want* of a righteousness acceptable to the divine purity; and what relieves must be *our having* such a righteousness either in ourselves, or by God's free gift. This Mr *S*——*n* himself seems to acknowledge, when he talks of "labouring in painful desire and fear," as the effect of his cramped view of the gospel. For why is this

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the effect? but because what he believes does not afford the proper satisfaction.

Mr *Sandeman*'s jealousy is, lest we, by pleading thus for a sinner's trust and confidence on Christ, should lead man into a self-dependence on his doing something to relieve himself from his dreadful circumstances, instead of being supported only by what Christ has already done. But how easy is it to perceive, that no man is or can be supported by what Christ has already done, but he that discovers it the object of his trust and confidence for everlasting life; and that so to depend on Christ, and what he has done, is the very opposite of all self-dependence, and inconsistent with our depending on our doing any thing either present or future?

It is true, a man that is at an entire uncertainty without any dependence whatever, is as clear of self-dependence, as he is of dependence on what Christ has done. So a man that neither eats nor drinks, is as much out of danger of dying with gluttony and excess, as he is of being poisoned with unwholesome food. But how long can a man live thus? And how long can a man support without having some dependence or other for his soul? It is as natural for the mind of man to depend on something against the fears of hereafter, as it is for his body to gravitate or sink till it meets with a proper support. Hence we find, that those who depend not on the truth, depend on some falsehood or other which they suppose to be true; and when a man is beat off from one false dependence, he is sinking to despair till he finds another, or is relieved by the *real truth*. And that *truth* which relieves, must reveal a foundation of dependence for everlasting life; to attempt to rest short of this, is to attempt to build a castle in the air. The discovery, that "God may, if he pleases, have mercy upon me "as I at present stand," although it tends to remove the Pharisaic wish or want to know that I am distinguished from others, yet leaves me unsupported as to original and real dread of conscience arising from my personal deficiency. And as such slight the divine warrant for the sinner's trust and confidence in Christ's sufficient righteousness, they naturally sink to the hope of eternal life, not by what Christ has done, or what the gospel declares, but a hope that they are the sheep of Christ who hear his voice, which is in fact only a hope *in themselves*.

The generality of mankind are but little concerned about the truth of the foundation of their peace of conscience; so

they have got ſome hope, it is enough; they do not care to be diſturbed from it with ſuch a controverſy as this; eſpecially if they can but conceit themſelves holy, or feel themſelves happy: not conſidering, that if their hope is founded on falſehood, their whole religion is a deceit: But they who are taught of God, are not led by fond conjectures; they will not be ſatisfied with any other reaſon of their hope than the voice of that God who ſpeaks in the conſcience; and Chriſt the Saviour of the guilty given to be truſted in, is the only foundation that God has laid in *Zion*.

I have only to add, that the manner in which the ſubject is treated, that is, by ſhort remarks on the paſſages we are concerned with, was the way in which the ſubject was treated for Mr *Hervey*'s view; and as I could think of no ſhorter method of defence, it is ſo preſented to the public.

LET-

LETTERS

FROM

MR HERVEY

TO

THE AUTHOR.

Dear SIR,

LAST night I received your kind letter *; and this morning I have but a moment's ſpace, in which to acknowledge it. However, I cannot neglect the firſt opportunity.—Are you the author that has given us an abridgment of Mr *Marſhall?* Truly, I think, you have well beſtowed your labour, and well executed your work. I wiſh you had not given yourſelf the trouble of ſending me the book, becauſe I have it, and highly prize it.—The abridgment I mean.

I ſhould be very glad if you would read the dialogue you mention with a critical attention, if you would point out the places where you think I am confuſed in my apprehenſions, injudicious in method, or weak in argument. As you have ſo throroughly

* When I perceived by his firſt edition of *Theron and Aſpaſio*, that he had ſo publicly eſpouſed the truths for which I had incurred the diſpleaſure of many of his profeſſed friends and admirers, I wrote to him, ſignifying my fellowſhip with him in the deſpiſed truth.

thoroughly ſtudied the point, and ſo often taught the doctrine you muſt eaſily ſee where the eſſay lies moſt open to objection, and where the point might receive additional ſtrength.—You would much oblige me, if you would do this with the utmoſt impartiality and freedom; and, I hope, you would do ſervice to the truth as it is in *JESUS*. Several perſons, I find, are diſſatisfied with my opinion on this head. Do, Sir, review dialogue xvi. and favour me with your free remarks, and friendly improvements. Whatever of this kind is done, I beg may be done ſpeedily; becauſe a new edition is in the preſs, and the printers will ſoon come to that part.—When I hear from you again, I will ſpeak my ſentiments with relation to your well-calculated deſign of an evangelical library *. At preſent I have leiſure only to aſſure you, that I am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend in JESUS CHRIST,

Weſton, Apr. 15. JAMES HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

I Received your preſent by the coach; I thank you for it; and am much pleaſed with it—The doctrine † which you approve in my eſſay, and have clearly diſplayed and fully proved in your own writings, is not reliſhed by every body; no, not by many pious people. I take the liberty to ſend you a couple of letters containing objections ‡. I wiſh you would be ſo

* An intended collection of the moſt evangelical pieces from the beginning of the reformation down to the preſent day. And as nothing was deſigned but the marrow of each performance, ſo he judged it might be comprized in ſix volumes, and deſired that an abridgment of *Theron and Aſpaſio* might have a place in one volume of it.

† This was a ſummary of doctrine, extracted from Theron and Aſpaſio, in Aſpaſio's own words.

‡ Theſe objectors were adding no revealed truth to our minds, but on the contrary were only attempting to overthrow the ſolid foundation laid for the hope, confidence, and ſalvation of guilty ſinners; that which makes the goſpel glad tidings indeed to ſuch. They allowed, that the free and unconditional nature of the divine declarations concerning Chriſt as an object of truſt and confidence was the

so kind as to consider them, and in your *concise* way, which I much admire, to make your remarks upon them.—One of the letters, in case it exactly co-incided with my sentiments, I should think too diffuse and prolix. I love to have the force and the only foundation upon which trust or confidence could be established; but then they immediately contradicted this freeness of the divine grant, by clogging it with the pre-requisites of seriousness, sensibility of need, real desires, and in short every qualification that human pride could presume upon the divine favour with, provided no Saviour had ever been revealed: Whereas, the man taught of God is made *sensible*, that no qualification in him is to be a stepping-stone to the Redeemer's righteousness. His real *desire* is daily to live by that righteousness, not by his own; and he is *serious* in this matter as being of the greatest importance, counting all things but loss and dung, that he may win Christ, and be found in him, not having on his own righteousness which is of the law. They allowed the gospel-declarations contained what might be compared "to a free welcome to an entertainment, by a friend's invitation;" but denied that this gave them leave to believe that this entertainment was theirs; and only served as an inducement for them to do something, called reception, in order to found a title. They were answered, it was not theirs as a property in their disposal to give away, or trifle with; but theirs to partake of, it certainly was, by virtue of the invitation. And this partaking of Christ, and salvation in him, could be neither more nor less, than living by him in virtue of these declarations, instead of seeking a title by inherent qualifications; which would be, in fact, living by our own righteousness, and not by him. That if they allowed he was free for us to trust in, then the trust and confidence we pleaded for was vindicated as no presumption, but rather an obedience to our divinely-gracious Benefactor. The difference between Mr *Hervey* and them, lay in their different sentiments about what was the truth of the gospel: what *they* counted gospel, left them to seek for a something in themselves under the name of faith, on account of which they might conclude themselves saved persons. What Mr *Hervey* counted gospel, was the revelation of the divine righteousness to the most guilty, warranting their immediate trust and confidence therein; assuring them such confidence should not be disappointed. It is easy to perceive, that such confidence must be essential to the real belief of such doctrine; as, on the other hand, no assurance or confidence can be essential to the belief of that doctrine which leaves me to seek for my ground of confidence in a something more than what Christ has already done, and God has so freely presented to me. Mr *Hervey*'s view was not to establish a standard for the hope of salvation of this kind, as depending upon our inherent qualifications, whether called convictions, faith, repentance, or by any other name;

and spirit of a subject contracted into a small compass, and exhibited to our minds in one clear and easy view. Long discourses, and protracted arguments, dissipate the attention and overwhelm the memory.—I think you are very happy in expressing yourself with a brevity that is striking, yet perspicuous.

I am not shaken in my own opinion by these attacks; but I should be glad to deliver it more clearly, and establish it more firmly in another edition. If you can spare a little time from your own labours, I hope you will gratify me in this request; and I trust HE, whom you serve, will make it a blessing to me and to others.

I would beg of you to return these letters, and (if the LORD should enable you) with free observations on the MOST MATERIAL points, as soon as POSSIBLE; because our new edition goes on apace, and will soon come to dialogue xvi. I have some thoughts of enlarging it a little, and dividing it into two dialogues. At present it is rather too long to be read at once.

I heartily wish you success in your projected work. *I assure you*, it is my opinion, that such a work, if well executed, will be one of the most valuable services to the present age. You will not, I hope, be too hasty. Mr *W*—— has huddled over his performance in a most precipitate, and therefore most imperfect, manner. One would think his aim was, not to select the best and noblest passages, but to reprint those which came first to hand.—If I live to see another edition of *Theron* and *Aspasio* published, I will desire your acceptance of a set; and I hope it will be improved and enriched with your observations: which will be a favour acknowledged by,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend in JESUS CHRIST,

JAMES HERVEY.

P. S.

name; but rather to establish an important, comfortable, precious truth, concerning an open door of access to God by what Christ has done, and salvation in him, granted to the most guilty, on a supposition that every mouth is stopped, and all the world (in every pretension or plea unto righteousness) become perfectly on a level before him. This truth he apprehended was, when received, the conviction and faith of every true believer, and the foundation of immediate trust and confidence, and as such was necessary and essential to solid peace of conscience, and true holiness of heart and life; yet, at the same time, entirely opposite to the peace and holiness of men of the Pharisaic spirit. In short, we seemed to be only upon the old apostolic or reformation dispute still, *viz.* whether we are to be justified by faith in Christ without works? or whether we are first to find some righteousness in ourselves?

P. S. Pray don't spare my own performance; but freely animadvert upon *Aspasio*. I am sensible he sometimes speaks unguardedly, and sometimes seems inconsistent with himself.

Weston-Favell, Apr. 22. 1755.

Dear SIR,

I Received your last valuable letter, and sincerely thank you for the judicious observations it contained.—Your other letter also, which conveyed an answer to ——, came safe to hand.—How is it, dear Sir, that godly * people are so averse to this doctrine †?

I have another letter from ——, containing remarks upon, and objections to, Mr *Marshall*, I would transmit it to you by this conveyance, but I remember you have already work upon your hands. In my next it shall wait upon you. My only aim, I trust, is to find out the truth as it is in *JESUS*; which, at present, I am convinced is with you. There is so much clearness and simplicity in your doctrine, it is so suitable to the goodness of GOD, and so eminently conducive to the comfort, recovery, and happiness of a sinner, that I cannot be persuaded to relinquish it.—I should be glad to maintain it in a convincing, yet the most inoffensive manner. I propose to

* Mr *Hervey* here uses the word *godly* in the common signification of it, as distinguishing the religious from those who profess no religion; but, in the scripture-sense of the word, it is confined to those whose religion is formed by the belief and love of that truth which came from God for the hope of the guilty.

† These godly people he mentions mistook him continually, by apprehending all he said in the light of the properly-qualified faith; whereas his apprehension was totally in the light of free salvation to the guilty, as the ground of immediate confidence: and as they could make no hesitation about confiding in the Lord, if (as they termed it) *their evidences were clear*; so he made no hesitation about confiding in the Lord as a guilty sinner; the divine declarations to the guilty answering to him as the foundation of his confidence, as their evidences would to them if they could conceive them to be clear; and as his confidence only arose from the truth he believed, it stood in so near a connection with it, that he accounted it essential to it: as, on the other hand, their confidence depending upon what they found in themselves, as distinguishing characteristics of God's children, could only have existence when and while they could thus conceive of themselves.

to allot two dialogues for this very important ſubject. How, in what form and order would you adviſe me to proceed? Pray don't ſcruple to expreſs yourſelf with all poſſible freedom. Direct and correct, as a friend and fellow-labourer *, *&c.*

Dear SIR,

LAST night I received the favour of your two packets; and, I aſſure you, a real favour I eſteem them. Your anſwers are ſo clear, ſo conſiſtent, ſo comfortable; they very much tend to eſtabliſh my mind.—I find by your experience, the "account I mean of GOD's dealings with your ſoul," that you have incurred (but ſurely without any juſt cauſe) the diſpleaſure of many. Now, as this is the caſe, my dear Sir, let us act prudently; be wiſe as ſerpents. Don't you think, I beg of you, that I am aſhamed of your friendſhip. GOD forbid! But as I have ſome concern, and you have a greater zeal for theſe precious doctrines, let us uſe the moſt probable means to ſpread them. You know the power of prejudice is great; is almoſt incredible. Many people, were they to know, that you and I have been laying our counſels together, perhaps would never look into my book. We ſeem now to have a favourable opportunity of diffuſing theſe ſacred and delightful truths †. My books have been well ſpoken of in three of the *London* ‡ Magazines ſucceſſively; and there is printing a new edition. The *LORD JESUS*, the WONDERFUL COUNSELLOR, direct us in this truly-important affair.—I will now, relying on his unerring SPIRIT, ſet about preparing the xvith dialogue for the preſs; and I ſhould be very deſirous to have it paſs under your examination before it is launched into the world. You will give me leave to expect

* The remainder of this letter is loſt.

† How evidently does Mr *Sandeman* appear to be miſtaken, in calling this the popular doctrine, or in judging that Mr *Hervey* had gained a public eſteem on the account of it?

‡ Some of theſe recommendations were not to the advantage of the truth, which it was his main deſign to communicate: of this Mr *Sandeman* has not failed to take notice; and it muſt be acknowledged, that a reſentment of the offices of ſuch a friend might not have been improper. But the ſame reaſons which he had for deſiring the ſilence of one friend for the preſent, may be juſtly ſuppoſed the reaſon he ſhewed no reſentment to the officiouſneſs of the other.

pect an answer; and let me know from time to time, where a letter may find you, sent by,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and affectionate brother in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, May 8. J. HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

I Have been so poorly in my health, and so much engaged in company, that I could not possibly get the inclosed ready before this time; which is the cause, the only cause, of my deferring my thanks for your last favour.

As to the doctrine under consideration, I have given a favourable and attentive ear to all that is said against it; and yet the more it is attacked, the more I am convinced of its truth. The *LORD JESUS* enable me to deliver and testify, with clearness of sentiment, and meekness of temper, what I am persuaded in my own conscience, is the true gospel of grace!—The inclosed paper contains some of the alterations which I propose to make. Another sheet will comprise the remainder. Let me desire you, dear Sir, to examine them, and remark upon them, as freely and impartially as you have done upon other papers. Pray treat me with a kind severity. Whatever sentence or expression appears wrong, I beg of you, animadvert, correct, spare it not. I assure you, I can bear to be told, (by your friendly pen at least,) this is not evangelical; here you contradict yourself; this is redundant, and that ambiguous.—Please to make little marks of reference in the MS. and pen down your observations on a separate paper.

I think to drop my first design of dividing the essay into two dialogues, and answering the various objections. *This* I intend to postpone for the present; and would print no more than is needful to explain, establish, and guard the tenet.—I think to add in a note, a friendly invitation to any serious and ingenuous person on the other side of the question, to debate and sift this very important point; professing, that if it can be proved erroneous, I will retract and renounce it, not only without reluctance, but with pleasure and thankfulness. Truth, the truth of the gospel, is my pearl; where-ever I find it, thither (without respect to names or persons) would I resort, and there would I abide. May that gracious promise be fulfilled

to us in our searches, "The LORD shall guide thee continually!"—I hope to send you, very soon, the residue, and am,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and affectionate friend in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, May 31. 1755. J. HERVEY.

Dear SIR,

LAST night I was favoured with your second letter, and sincerely thank you for the freedom you have used, and the corrections you have made.—Herewith I send the remainder of dialogue xvi. those parts, I mean, that are to undergo some alteration. I wish you could borrow the larger edition; to that the numeral references are made, as from that the new edition is printing.—I hope you will be so kind as to examine this MS. also with a friendly severity. Spare no sentiment or expression, I beseech you, that so much as seems contrary to the sound words of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*. If you see any thing that may conveniently be omitted, I wish you would include it in a parenthesis; for, I fear, the dialogue will be too long, and overwhelm the attention.

I am sorry that I am so straitened in time, and can say no more; my servant waits, and if I delay him any longer, will be too late to dispatch some necessary business for the family.—Be pleased to favour me with your observations as soon as possible, because the printers will, if they are delayed much longer, be tempted to impatience. I should be glad if you would make *Weston* in your way, when you return from *Norwich*. May the *LORD JESUS* strengthen your judgment, make you of quick understanding, and enable you to detect every thing, in my poor essay, that is not agreeable to his word!—I am in doubt whether this letter should be directed to you at *London*, or *Norwich*.—A mistake in this particular may cause a longer delay in the affair. The all-seeing GOD guide me in every thing! I chuse *London*, and hope it will come to your hand before you set out. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your obliged and truly affectionate friend in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, June 12. J. HERVEY.

Dear

Dear SIR,

I Should be very glad, and much obliged, if you could give me your company in your return from *Norwich*, that we may thoroughly canvass, and carefully examine the important subject of our correspondence. I have ordered the printers to keep their types, composed for this part of my work, standing; and to proceed with the remainder, before this is worked off. So that I hope to have the whole, in proof sheets, to lay before you in one view, provided you could favour me with your company pretty soon.

A celebrated divine from abroad writes thus, in a private letter to his friend; in which he speaks the very sentiments of my heart, and I apprehend, of yours also.

" I apprehend, Mr *Hervey*'s definition of faith will expose " him most to the generality of divines, both of the church " of *England* and dissenters; though it is a very good one, " when well explained. The persuasion or assurance which is " in the very nature of faith, must be carefully distinguished " from that which has, in a manner, appropriated the name " of assurance to itself; I mean that exercise of spiritual sense " following upon saving faith, whereby a believer sees, and, " upon good grounds, concludes himself to be in a state of " grace and salvation, and that he has an actual interest in " *CHRIST*, and his whole purchase, even eternal life. " The foundation of this assurance of sense, is the believer's " experience and feeling of what the HOLY GHOST has al- " ready wrought in his soul, and it runs into this conclusion; " I find the fruits of the SPIRIT planted in my soul; I am a " new creature; I love the *LORD JESUS* in sincerity *; " and it is one of the greatest burdens of my life, that I have " no love suited to so glorious a one †. From all which, I " am sure, GOD has given me *CHRIST*, pardoned my " sins,

* It must be remembered, that they who love the Lord Jesus, love him that came to save, not the righteous, but the guilty; not the qualified, but the lost.

† This manner of expression, which this friend never learned from the scriptures, but catched (as I suppose) thro' common custom, savours too much of the leaven of the Pharisees. The Christian, conscious to himself that he is guilty, makes no account of the degrees of imperfect love, but lives solely and entirely by the righteousness revealed for the hope of the guilty: and what he lives by, he loves; not as a task proportioned by the worthiness of the object, but as an affection arising from the truth believed.

" ſins, I am in a ſtate of grace, and muſt go to glory. But " the ground and foundation of that particular perſuaſion and " aſſurance, which is in the nature of ſaving faith, is the glo- " rious authority and faithfulneſs of GOD in the goſpel re- " cord, promiſe, and offer; and it riſes no higher than this, " that GOD offers, and thereby, as he is true and faithful, " gives *CHRIST*, with all his fulneſs, to me, to be believed " on, and truſted in, for life and eternal ſalvation *. So that " I not only ſafely and warrantably may, but am obliged † to " receive, apply, and make uſe of *JESUS CHRIST* as " my own Saviour, by reſting on him, and truſting to him as " ſuch. JEHOVAH's great gift, offer, and promiſe, gives " every ſinner a ſufficient warrant to do this, and are a ſtrong " immoveable foundation for this perſuaſion or aſſurance of " faith Nor can any other ſolid ſatisfying anſwer be given to " a broken-hearted humbled creature ‡, who puts away from " himſelf the gracious promiſes and offers of the goſpel upon " this ill-grounded imagination, that they do not belong to " him. To whom it always may, and ought to be anſwered, " that they do belong to him, in the ſenſe I have mentioned ‖."

This

* This is well expreſſed, and evidently diſtinguiſhes his meaning of the word *offer*, from the *offer* of a bargain to any who will come up to the terms. He evidently means the *real grant* of the bleſſings, as when money, food, and cloathing, are offered to the poor, famiſhed, or naked.

† They who hear and underſtand this goſpel-grace, find it their bounden duty, as well as their happy privilege, and heart's inclination, no more to ſeek to live by their own, but to live entirely by the divine righteouſneſs.

‡ If this gentleman, by *a broken-hearted humbled creature*, means ſome that were hereby more qualified for mercy than the reſt, he would differ from us widely; but if (as I apprehend) he only means thoſe whoſe criminal remorſe renders them abſolutely deſtitute of every other hope than by Chriſt alone, we are of one mind.

‖ One of the moſt evangelical-appearing objections againſt this grant of Chriſt to be believed on, is, " That, according to this " doctrine, the free gift does not ſecure their reigning in life on " whom it is beſtowed; becauſe they may riſe to damnation for all " that abundance of the gift." To which it may be anſwered, That gift, though to ſinners indefinitely, that they may live by it, yet is a nonentity to every one till he hears it, and no conveyance of righteouſneſs to any man that does not believe it, according to that which is ſpoken. And on the other hand, where a man does really believe it, he undoubtedly lives by it; and there *grace reigns thro' righteouſneſs to eternal life*, over all who are thus begotten again.

This extract is, I think, the precise explanation of our doctrine. If you find any expression, not exactly suited to your opinion, please to observe it. I am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate and obliged brother in CHRIST,

Weston, July 6. 1755. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

LAST night I received your favour, and according to your request, have written to my excellent friend, without delaying a single post. The *LORD JESUS* accompany my conciliatory offices with his heavenly blessing!

I hope you had a good journey, and are well in health, and joyful through faith.—We shall all be glad to hear, that —— bore his journey comfortably, and is returned home more and more established in the love of his blessed *LORD*.

I hope you do not forget me and my family, my people, and my work at the press.—May the good *LORD* prosper you, and your labours of love!

I am much straitened for time, and can add no more at present, but that

I am yours, most cordially,

Aug. 4. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

MR *W——d* has been with me, and went away last week. We had much talk concerning you. I told him what I thought of your conversation and doctrine. What I could urge seemed to make no impression. I assure you, my esteem for you is not diminished. I am more and more persuaded, that your method of stating that grand and precious doctrine —the doctrine of faith in *CHRIST*—is the truth of the gospel. Your company, whenever you come this way, will be truly acceptable to all my family.

I wish you would inform me of the mistakes which you apprehend to be in Dr *Crisp*'s sermons. I have the new edition; intend

intend to read them very attentively; and ſhould be glad of your cautionary hints.

Pray let me hear from you ſoon; and believe me to be,

Dear SIR,

Your cordial and faithful friend,

Weſton, Sept. 9. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Received your welcome letter from *London*. I ſhould have anſwered it much ſooner, but I had quite forgot where to direct. The direction was given in the firſt letter you ever wrote to me, which, conſiſting only of kind and friendly expreſſions, I ſuffered to periſh, as I do all letters of that kind. Your other epiſtolary favours I carefully preſerve.—I have waited and waited one day after another, in hopes of ſeeing you at *Weſton*, in your return to *Norwich*; and have been uneaſy in myſelf, leaſt you ſhould think I neglect your correſpondence. Indeed I do not. Neither do I forget my promiſe. I have a ſet of the new edition, reſerved on purpoſe for you; to be delivered into your own hand, if you call upon me. Or I will order a ſet to be left for you in *London*, where-ever you ſhall appoint.

I ſincerely thank you for the copy of your letter. The ſentiments are ſuch as I wiſh to have written on my heart; ſuch as I wiſh to ſpeak and teach, while I live; and in my writings (if my writings ſurvive me) to teſtify when I am dead. May the good LORD bear witneſs to ſuch doctrine, by making it healing to the conſcience, and fruitful in the converſation.

Your treatiſe of *marks and evidences* I will attentively read. If any thing occurs, which ſeems to need explication or alteration, I will moſt freely communicate it.

Pray let me hear from you ſoon. Inform me how you go on with Mr ——. Depend upon it, I will do you all the ſervice that lies in my power. Not merely becauſe you are a friend, whom I eſteem, but alſo becauſe I am perſuaded, you work the work of the *LORD JESUS*.—To whoſe tender love I commend yourſelf and your labours; and am,

Dear SIR,

Your truly-affectionate friend,

Weſton, Oct. 9. J. HERVEY.

My

My dear friend,

YOUR welcome letter is now in my hand. I thank you for the remarks it contains. The LORD make us of quick understanding in the fear of the LORD!

I have read the treatise concerning *marks and evidences.* I am going, as soon as I have dispatched this letter, to read it again. If to do the heart good be a sign of its value, I can very confidently bear this testimony to its worth. It refreshes my spirit and comforts my soul. I hope, when re-published, it will be attended with this blessed effect to multitudes of readers *.—I believe it would be advisеable to send it abroad without a name, and commit it wholly to the disposal of Him, who is head over all things to the church.

Did you ever see a little treatise written by one Mr *Beart*, formerly pastor of a church in the place where you now reside? It is styled *A vindication of the eternal law and everlasting gospel?* It is but very lately that it came to my hands. It appears to me a truly valuable piece.—I forgot to desire, that you would present my most cordial salutations to Mr ——. It is not for want of esteem that I do not write to him, but from want of health, and a multiplicity of engagements. I should be very glad, if he would communicate with all freedom, any remarks that he himself has made, or has heard from others, relating to *Theron* and *Aspasio*.

Mr —— called upon me, about ten days ago, in his return to *London*. He staid only to make a hasty breakfast, so that I had very little conversation with him. I hope the GOD of power, and the GOD of peace, will unite our hearts in the love of the spirit, and unite our hands in the work of the LORD.

There is no stage goes from *Northampton* to *Suffolk*. I believe I may convey a parcel by the *Cambridge* carrier. I will inquire of him, when he comes this way; and if it is a practical thing, you shall have the books by his next return.

We shall be all glad to entertain you at *Weston*, and my best prayers will always accompany your labours in the LORD.

—I

* This treatise, so useful to my worthy friend, was one of the most offensive pieces to my opponents; which very plainly manifests, that whatever compliments and pretensions of regard might be paid to Mr *Hervey*, they differed exceedingly in taste and judgment of spiritual things.

—I send a frank, lest your stock should be exhausted.—Write to me soon, and pray for me ever, who am,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate brother in CHRIST,

Weston, Nov. 8. 1755. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Sent, last week, by the *Cambridge* carrier, a set of my books. He promised me to deliver them to the *Bury* carrier; and, I hope, by this time, they have reached your hands.—Whenever you peep upon them, pray be so kind as to note down any expressions or sentiments that are not THOROUGHLY evangelical. I shall be pleased with them, and thankful for them, even though I should not have, through the want of a new edition, an opportunity of inserting them in my volumes.

I have been thinking of your proposal to re-publish your treatise on *marks and evidences.* Suppose you transmit it, detached from any other piece, under a frank to me. Suppose I send it to an understanding and sagacious friend; and learn his sentiments, and get his critical observations on it. By this means, you will see what is likely to give offence, or meet with objection; and may, perhaps, be enabled so to form your arguments, so to draw up your forces, as to prevent or baffle any attack. If you approve of this scheme, send me a copy of the piece; tear off the title-page, and I will immediately convey it to a friend, who lives at a great distance from *London*, who knows nothing of the author, and will give me his opinion, without favour or disaffection.

Lest you should not be furnished with a frank, I send the inclosed.—My sister is gone from home; my mother is in health, and will always be glad of such conversation as yours; which will be equally agreeable to,

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend and brother in CHRIST JESUS,

Weston, Nov. 25. 1755. J. HERVEY.

My

My dear friend,

I Received, with pleasure and gratitude, your letter and its contents. Would have made my acknowledgments immediately; but waited a post or two, in hopes of transmitting to you some remarks on your treatise. But my friend has not sent them. As soon as they come, they shall be forwarded to you.

I am very much pleased with your explanation of, *In the* LORD *have I righteousness.* "*I* a sinner, not I a new or "sanctified creature." This is encouraging; this is delightful; it is like a door opened in the ark for me, even for me to enter. Blessed be GOD for such truths! Such truths make the gospel glad tidings indeed to my soul. They are the very thing which I want; and the only thing which can give me comfort, or do me good *.

* If Mr *Hervey* may be believed, nothing was more offensive to him, than those encomiums on his piety, which only serve to render his confession of himself hypocritical, and his doctrine false. In all his thoughts, in all his practice, he found himself a sinner; and in nothing more so, than in entertaining any good conceit of himself, or his own state, by comparison with other men. God had taught him he had no rule to measure by, but the perfect law, or will of heaven; and every single deviation served to render his plea of righteousness vain, to class him among the rest of mankind-sinners, and subject him to eternal vengeance. In the view of these circumstances, mercy revealed in Christ Jesus to the guilty, was a precious joyful sound, which he heard and lived by. Had he heard any one describe the holy, heavenly, pious Mr *Hervey*, he would have replied, You have described a man that will never enter heaven; but in the guilty Mr *Hervey*, living only by the divine righteousness, you find the man that is taught of God.

To love the divine righteousness provided for the guilty as such; to love God thus characterized as just, and the justifier of the ungodly by the righteousness of his Son; to love them that are of this truth, for the truth's sake dwelling in them, is, according to scripture-account, the distinguishing *holiness of truth*, whereby the children of God are manifested from the children of the devil; and the works of love to this righteousness, are the only works that will be openly rewarded and acknowledged in the great day. It is also evident, from scripture and experience, that men may compass sea and land to make a proselyte, may give all their goods to feed the poor, and even their bodies to be burned, yet want this charity; they may do all this, and at the same time manifest themselves to be the children of them who crucified Jesus, by their conduct towards his real gospel, and the disciples of it.

When people inquire, whether ſanctification is an evidence of juſtification? I ſuppoſe, by ſanctification, they mean what St *Paul* calls the fruits of the SPIRIT; love of GOD, charity to man, meekneſs, temperance *, *&c.* Now, may we not allow theſe to be proper evidences of faith, but maintain that the appropriating faith, or the faith of perſuaſion †, is the appointed means of producing them! *The life which I live in the fleſh*, the life of holineſs, uſefulneſs, and comfort, *I live by the faith of the SON of GOD.* What this faith is, he explains in the next ſentence; by viewing the SON of GOD, *as loving me, and giving himſelf for me.*—Pray favour me with your opinion of *1 John* iii. 19. This ſeems one of the texts, leaſt reconcileable with our doctrine ‡.

I have a long letter from a new hand, wrote very fair, and drawn up in an elaborate manner, in oppoſition to my account of faith, and to ſeveral parts of *dialogue* xvi. It conſiſts of five ſheets, wrote on every ſide; too large I apprehend to come under a frank, otherwiſe I would tranſmit it to you for your

* They ſhould mean ſo; and the fruit of love, *&c.* which is evidently from this operation of the divine truth we plead for, is undoubtedly a confirming evidence of its having become our faith, and of its divine efficacy in working by love.

† By *appropriating faith*, he means the confidence ariſing from the belief of the truth, of righteouſneſs and ſalvation freely preſented to the guilty in Chriſt Jeſus, as their immediate ground of confidence; which he alſo ſtyles the *faith of perſuaſion*, to diſtinguiſh it from that which is deſcribed, not by what we are perſuaded of, but as a hidden, holy principle, diſcoverable only by the good qualifications which diſtinguiſh us from others.

‡ *Hereby we* (the children of the truth, by loving one another for the truth's ſake alone, not in word and in tongue, but in deed and in truth) *hereby we know* (or have an additional confirming knowledge,) *that we are of the truth* we profeſs, *and ſhall aſſure our hearts before him*, ſaying with Peter, *Lord, thou knoweſt all things, thou knoweſt that* we *love thee:* For *if our hearts condemn us*, that we love not thoſe who are of this truth, or that our love to them is not for this truth's ſake, whatever pretenſions we may make to the faith, and of comfort, joy, holineſs, *&c.* yet *God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things;* therefore cannot be deceived by our pretended regard to him and his truth, while we love not them who are of this truth. But, *beloved, if our hearts condemn us not*, (if the law of the New Teſtament, *Jer.* xxxi. 33. to believe on Chriſt, or live by his righteouſneſs, and love one another for this truth's ſake, is written on our hearts,) *then have we confidence towards God.*

your perusal. And I hope to see you ere long; then we may examine it together.

I am glad to hear that you are acquainted with Mr ——, and that he is so well acquainted with the truth as it is in *JESUS*. The LORD enable him, and raise up many more ministers, to spread abroad the joyful sound.—When you give me your company, do not forget to bring with you the evangelical piece on the work of the SPIRIT in bringing a soul to *CHRIST*.

There is one passage in *dialogue* xvi. which, I think, is very injudiciously inserted, and is really a mistake. The *note*, p. 303. I observed it a good while ago, and expunged it from my copy; and my new opposer has not spared to animadvert upon it. What need have we to pray for that divine GUIDE, *who leads into all truth!* May this divine GUIDE dwell in us, and walk in us, be our counsellor and comforter even unto death!—Dear Mr *Cudworth*, I hope, will not forget in his prayers the weakest of ministers, and the weakest of believers, —but his

Affectionate brother in CHRIST,

Weston, Jan. 26. 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received your valuable remarks, and sincerely thank you for them. May our divine MASTER enable us, both to discern and to display the truth as it is in *JESUS*.

I am much pleased, and thoroughly satisfied, with your explanation of *Acts* ii. 39 *. The proposals seem to me clear, pertinent,

* *Acts* ii. 39. The persons mentioned, were pricked in their hearts at hearing that God had made that same Jesus, whom they had crucified, both Lord and Christ, and said, *Men and brethren, what shall we do?* We don't find that *Peter* had been preaching to them any such doctrine as that, "if they were much affected with their "sins, and wounded at heart with a godly sorrow for them, they "had an interest in the promise of life and salvation." This would have been only introducing the *Pharisaic* distinction, which our Saviour constantly opposed. On the contrary, when *Peter* declared, that God had made *that same Jesus*, who opposed such distinctions in the *Pharisees*, and was rejected on that account, that God had made him *both Lord and Christ, they were confounded.* All their pretensions to righteousness, and acceptance with God, forsook them. They

pertinent, and weighty. If I am able to make any slight correction in the style, it shall be transmitted in my next.—I would now only ask, how far you have proceeded in the work? I think you should by all means get the greater part (the whole, I would rather say) completed, before you begin to publish. If this is not done, many unforeseen accidents may arise, which will probably straiten you in point of time, and oblige you to be precipitate in your preparations for the press. And I am inclined to query, whether it is not a piece of justice we owe to the public, not to engage them in purchasing a piece, till it is put beyond the power of common casualties to render it imperfect.—Pray, therefore, let me know what progress you have made. I could wish to have it judiciously executed, and not performed in that confused, inaccurate, slovenly manner, which must be a continual discredit to Mr *W*——'s *Christian library*.

I rejoice to find, that the gospel of our salvation is spreading. May it have a free course and an extensive circuit! till the fountain becomes a river, and the river widens into a sea!

The inclosed came a little while ago.—My friend is very severe. It will give you an opportunity of exercising forbearance and gentleness. He knows nothing at all of the author.

When

They were pricked in their hearts at these tidings, and cried out, *Men and brethren what shall we do?* If Jesus is Lord and Christ, what will become of us? Then *Peter* exhorted to the assurance we plead for, in these words, *Repent, and be baptized in the name of Jesus, for the remission of sins;* (for the words thus circumstanced bear evidently this sense): "Your case is undoubtedly desperate; you have been to this moment God's enemies; even so far have you carried your opposition, as *with wicked hands to crucify and slay the Lord's* Christ, sent for your deliverance. Nevertheless, *in this man's name is preached unto you remission of sins:* therefore *repent* of your wickedness in opposing him; submit to him as your free given righteousness and salvation; be baptized in his name *for the remission of your sins*, and live from henceforth by him, as your proper righteousness: assuring yourselves of *remission of sins* by him alone; and you shall receive the promised gift of the *Holy Ghost* as it has come upon us: *For the promise is to you and to your children.*" And *with many other words did he exhort them, saying,* (by flying to this same Jesus as your proper refuge,) *Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word,* out of the mixed multitude, *were baptized; and the same day were added about three thousand souls.*—From the whole thus considered, there is nothing to contradict the call and promise of God directed to sinners as such; but, on the contrary, a foundation for calling upon the most guilty to live immediately by the Redeemer's righteousness.

When your other affairs will allow leiſure, pleaſe to return the letter with your obſervations; which will oblige, and, I truſt, edify.

Dear SIR,

Your affectionate friend,

Weſton, Apr. 21. 1756. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Have only time to beg of you, if you have the letter of remarks on Mr *Marſhall*'s book, to return it to me as ſoon as you can. If there are any obſervations that are juſt, and ſuch as animadvert upon paſſages *truly exceptionable*, be ſo kind as to give me your opinion on them. The reaſon of my deſiring this, is a proſpect of a new edition of *Marſhall*.—A bookſeller is inclined to print one, and ſell it at half a crown price; I believe encouraged thereto by my recommendation of it. The recommendation has been printed in our *Northampton* news-paper, and immediately there was a demand for twenty-three of your abridgements. But the printer could not procure enough to ſupply the demands. Mr *K*—— deſires you will ſend a freſh ſupply to him.

In the greateſt haſte, but with great ſincerity and affection,

Yours,

May 27. JAMES HERVEY.

My Dear Friend,

THis comes to inform you, that Mr —— has begun an edition of *Marſhall;* in much the ſame ſize, and exactly the ſame letter, as *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*. If you have any thing to obſerve, pray let me have it with as much ſpeed as you can make. If you have Mr ——'s objections, examine them attentively; and, I hope, you will be enabled to obviate what is material. I ſhould be glad if you could, after you have digeſted your notes, give me your company, that we might talk them over. Now is the time, in all probability, to make *Marſhall* a well-known ſpreading book.— I hope the LORD will enlighten your underſtanding; fructify your in-

ventions;

vention; ſtrengthen your judgment; and enable you to write "ſound words, ſuch as cannot be condemned."—I am,

Very affectionately yours,

Weſton, June 17. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

YEſterday I received your letter, and am much obliged to you for it. Pray do not mention Mr ——'s name, nor ſhew his letter. I hope to adhere to the truths of the goſpel; but yet I would endeavour to live in harmony, of affection and friendly intercourſe at leaſt, with thoſe who differ.—I cannot think, that Mr —— could have any knowledge of the author of the diſcourſe *againſt märks and evidences.*—I will read your treatiſe over again, with my beſt attention. For, I aſſure you, it always does me good. I will alſo compare it with your remarks on Mr ——; which, in my opinion, are ſolid and ſatisfactory; I am ſure they are encouraging and comfortable.

When *Marſhall* was advertiſed in our news-paper, the gentleman that inſerted my recommendation, added this note to explain one ſentence.—"By uncommon road, 'tis preſumed, the recommender means the very evangelical nature, and remarkably-inſtructive method of the directions laid down by Mr *Marſhall* (than whom no man, perhaps, was ever better acquainted with the human heart) for the effectual practice of holineſs, as likewiſe ſomewhat of obſcurity which is confeſſedly in his 3d and 4th direction."

I apprehend, the obſcurity of chapter 3. and 4. ariſes, not from any improper manner of treating the ſubjects, but from the myſterious * nature of the ſubjects themſelves.—I will write to the bookſeller to ſuſpend his procedure of the preſs till he hears farther. But let this *haſten* you, my dear friend, in communicating what you have to obſerve. I ſhould be glad to have our common favourite, as clear and unexceptionable as poſſible, *&c. &c.* †

My dear friend,

THE cauſe of my writing is this, Mr —— is upon the point of publiſhing a new edition of *Marſhall.* I have given

* Myſterious, becauſe contrary to our natural notions, the *natural man not receiving the things of the Spirit of God.*

† The remainder of this letter is loſt.

given him the inclosed letter, to introduce it into the world; but was desirous to have you peruse it and correct it, before it goes to the press. Be so kind, therefore, as to examine it strictly; and where-ever you think it should be altered, use with it the freedom of a friend. The more rigour, the more kindness.

I send a frank to be the vehicle of your observations, together with the printed half-sheet.

As soon as I have finished what you mention, it shall be transmitted. Though I would fain see one of the books completely abridged, before any proposals or advertisements appear. It is a matter of great importance, pray let it be executed with care and correctness. May the Keeper of *Israel* protect you in your journeys, and the Light of the world guide you in your work!

Affectionately yours,

Weston, Oct. 6. 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

MR —— told Mr *W——d* that I *offered* to write a *preface* to your remarks on his sermons. I told Mr *W——d* the whole of the affair. That you informed me of your design, and what I answered. That I desire it might be conducted in a tender and respectful manner. That the title should be more friendly and benign. That you read what you proposed to say concerning my mentioning of *Marshall*; which I observed was inexpressive. If you said any thing, I thought it should be more weighty and significant. This was all the concern I had in the affair.

—That I had promised, not offered (for I don't remember I ever did such a thing in my life) to write a recommendatory introduction to the work, which you have in hand. That it was at your request, but with the real approbation of my judgment; for I apprehended that your design, when well executed, would be a valuable present to the world.

This comes by a gentleman who knows you. Let me hear what Mr —— says about the affair. And remember to give me a direction where to write to you. You date from *Margaret-street*; but this I suppose is not particular enough. I can

can add no more, leaſt the bearer ſhould be gone. Only I wiſh you much ſucceſs in preaching *CHRIST*.

Yours affectionately,

Weſton, Dec. 24. 1756. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Received your parcel containing ſeveral copies of *The Friendly Attempt*, &c. * My thanks ſhould have been returned ſooner; but I have been under that indiſpoſition and languor of ſpirit, which renders me unfit for every thing.

I think there is rather too much aſperity in the cloſe; and I wiſh that expreſſion "refined idolatry" had been a little ſoftened. This I mention only to yourſelf, and to give you a ſpecimen of that openneſs and freedom, which I would have take place in all our perſonal and epiſtolary intercourſes.

I have read your manuſcript again and again, with my beſt attention, and with much delight †. I have made here and there a ſmall alteration with regard to the language, only to render the ſenſe ſomewhat more perſpicuous, not to vary the peculiar caſt of your diction.—I heartily concur in receiving and embracing theſe doctrines. I think them to be truths of very great importance, and ſhall be truly glad to ſee them in print, that they may be ſpread and be univerſally known.

If I ſhould be enabled to finiſh a fourth volume of dialogues, I propoſe to have one conference on the aſſurance of faith ‡; to ſtate it more clearly, and to eſtabliſh it more ſtrongly. In this, I ſhall be glad to borrow ſeveral of your thoughts, and will make my acknowledgments accordingly; declaring, at the ſame time, my opinion of the piece, which lends me ſuch valuable aſſiſtance.

Preſent my moſt affectionate ſalutations to ——— ———. I received

* A friendly attempt to remove ſome fundamental miſtakes in the Rev. Mr *W*———*d*'s ſermons.

† *Aphoriſms on the aſſurance of faith.* The ſubſtance of them originally was what Mr *Hervey* takes notice of in his letter, dated *Oct.* 9. 1755 Afterward Mr *Hervey* deſired me to draw up the ſubſtance of the whole that had been canvaſſed, in as conciſe a manner as poſſible, for his own uſe. This, ſome time after, I propoſed for printing, and is the manuſcript here mentioned.

‡ Or in other words, the confidence that is founded on the truth we believe concerning Chriſt given to be *believed on*, or confided in.

received his obliging letter; I moſt ſincerely wiſh him ſucceſs, in diſplaying the unſearchable riches of grace, and the infinitely-glorious righteouſneſs of *CHRIST*. I hope he will not be diſpleaſed with my ſilence. It proceeds from no diſreſpect, but from a multiplicity of engagements, and a poor pittance of ſtrength, utterly inſufficient to fulfil them.—Pleaſe to thank —— for his very encouraging and comfortable letter. I wiſh, when he is at leiſure, he would favour me with another on this ſubject, how holineſs ſprings from faith, or a view of ſanctification as the effect of juſtification.

When ſhall I ſee you?—If —— writes to me on the ſubject you mention, he ſhall have a ſpeedy anſwer.—You need not ſend me the twelve queries, becauſe they have been tranſmitted me from *Scotland*. But ceaſe not to ſend up your prayers and ſupplications in behalf of your truly-affectionate friend,

J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

I Have, with attention and delight, read over your pamphlet. A ſlight alteration or two, relating to the language, I have made. But I deſire you will follow the determination of your own judgment.—As ſoon as they are printed, ſend me a quarter of a hundred; not as a preſent, but as a purchaſe.

The LORD has lately viſited me with a dangerous fever; which confined me to my room many days, and excluded me from the pulpit ſeveral *Sundays*. I am ſtill extremely weak in body. Pray that I may be ſtrong in the faith of our *LORD JESUS CHRIST*.—In his moſt precious and everlaſting righteouſneſs, I remain,

Affectionately yours,

J. HERVEY.

P. S. Send me a dozen of your *Aphoriſms*, when they are publiſhed.

Mr dear friend,

ONE principal cauſe of my long ſilence, I do aſſure you, was my ignorance of the place of your reſidence in *London*. I knew not, till Mr ——, yeſterday, gave me a direction where to write to you.

I thank you for your laſt packet. But you muſt give me leave to inſiſt upon paying for the contents, when I have the pleaſure of your company, which I want much. Can't you make *Weſton* in your way, and contrive to ſpend a couple of days with me? I cannot be ſatisfied with a ſhorter ſtay.——I have much to ſay to you; but as I will hope to ſee you, and converſe face to face, I ſhall not attempt to communicate my thoughts by ink and pen.

I have juſt publiſhed three ſermons. If you will call upon Mr *R*——'s in St *Paul*'s church-yard, or ſend a meſſenger with the note ſubjoined to this letter, he will deliver two of my pieces. Let me beg of you to peruſe them, with your pen in your hand; and to tranſmit whatever obſervations may occur.—I have ſome remarks upon your *Aphoriſms*, which you ſhall ſee, when you give me your company.—Have you ſeen a couple of volumes, lately publiſhed, and entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio?* *You* come in for a ſhare of chaſtiſement. What is your opinion in general of this performance? As to particular paſſages, we will poſtpone the examination of them, till GOD's providence grants us a perſonal interview *. Do you know who is, or who is ſuppoſed to be the author of this piece?

May the work of the *LORD JESUS* proſper in your heart, your tongue, your pen, and in thoſe of your truly

affectionate friend,

Weſton, Sept. 8. 1757. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I Received your letter, and return you my very ſincere thanks for your remarks †. I only wiſh that there had been more of them.

I hope it will not be long, before you give me your company at *Weſton*. Then we will examine the three dialogues, as they appear in their new form; and will conſider, and determine, concerning their publication ‡; or rather will beſeech the only

* The reſult of this conſideration, and of my after-correſpondence with Mr *Sandeman*, at Mr *Hervey*'s requeſt, ſee in the defence of *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*.

† Remarks on *Theron* and *Aſpaſio* conſidered with regard to the objections raiſed by the author of the letters.

‡ The publication of the 15th, 16th, and 17th dialogues corrected with regard to the objections of Mr *Sandeman*.

only wife GOD our SAVIOUR, to over-rule and guide our determination. Contrive to ſtay ſome time with me.

Try if you can get me *Taylor*'s book; or any of thoſe which you ſhewed me. *Neonomianiſm unmaſked*, if you can light on, purchaſe for me —I wiſh you growing conſolation in CHRIST, deliverance from all your troubles, and abundant ſucceſs in ſpreading abroad the ſavour of our REDEEMER's name, In whom I am,

Dear SIR,

Your true and affectionate friend and brother,

Weſton, Feb. 22. 1758. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

YEſterday your favour came to hand. I hope to ſee you at *Weſton* ere long, and then I will deliver the letters * into your own hand.—I have ſent you a couple of franks. If you want more, when I ſee you, I will endeavour to ſupply you.—I am glad you are debating the important point with Mr *Sandeman*. He ſeems to be an acute perſon; and if there is a flaw in our cauſe, he will be likely to diſcover it. But, as far as I can judge, he has found no ſuch thing hitherto.

May the GOD of truth and grace be with you; and enable you to underſtand and defend the firſt; to experience and abundantly enjoy the laſt.

Pleaſe to preſent my very affectionate reſpects to your worthy kinſman Mr ——, and recommend to his prayer, and remember in your own,

Dear SIR,

Your brother in CHRIST,

Weſton, Mar. 1. 1758. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

THIS comes to deſire you will inform me how I may direct a large letter to you; which I will ſend, as ſoon as your anſwer is received. It is a manuſcript †, which wants your examination,

* Letters of correſpondence between me and Mr *Sandeman*.

† This was an anſwer to Mr *John Weſley*'s objections againſt *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, and is ſo valuable a defence of imputed righteouſneſs, that its publication is much to be deſired.—It has been ſince publiſhed by Mr Hervey's brother, and may be ſeen in the preceding part of this volume.

examination, and it is of some importance. Therefore I am somewhat solicitous, that it may not miscarry.

Yours affectionately,

Weston, July 15. 1758. J. HERVEY.

P. S. You may direct your letter, to stop at *Northampton*. Don't use any of your franks. You will have greater occasion for them. Or, if your stock is spent, let me know.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

THIS day I received your letter, with the two *MS.* sheets inclosed. Accept my thanks for your remarks, and let me beg of you to examine the two sheets, which are now sent. I will take your advice with regard to Mr B——; and follow your hint, concerning your own work.——I apprehend there will be about *ten* such sheets; and that the piece will make a two-shilling pamphlet. I must intreat you to get time for the revisal of all; which shall be sent you, as you shall be able to dispatch the work. I am,

Dear SIR,

Most cordially yours,

July 27. 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

LAST week I sent you two sheets of the manuscript, now I send two more for your revisal. If you see a fair opportunity of contracting, please to make use of it: for, I fear, the piece will be too long. Inclose what you think may be omitted in a parenthesis, by a pencil.—Pray examine rigorously, by which you will very much oblige

Your truly affectionate

Weston, Aug. 2. 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear friend,

HERE I inclose two sheets more. They are very long. But I hope you will get time to revise them. Your last packet I received, and am much obliged for your remarks.—I apprehend, the piece will make a two-shilling pamphlet. If you

you could ſuggeſt or inſert any thing to make it *edifying* and uſeful, I ſhould be glad. Would it not be proper to print Mr *W——y*'s letter, and prefix it to my anſwer?——Have you left your own two books for me at my brother's? If you have not, pleaſe to leave them at Mr *J. R*——'s in St *Paul*'s church-yard. I am,

Dear SIR,

Cordially yours in CHRIST JESUS,

Weſton, Aug. 9. 1758. J. HERVEY.

P. S. I ſuppoſe about three ſheets more will finiſh the work.

My dear Friend,

HERE are two more ſheets. The laſt I received, with your valuable remarks. Pray beſtow the ſame attention on theſe. Two more, or leſs, will finiſh the eſſay; then I will diſcontinue writing, and employ myſelf in reading, eſpecially in reading *Luther*'s comment*. Can't you procure for me *Taylor*'s book? I am,

Dear SIR,

Affectionately yours,

Aug. 16. J. HERVEY.

My dear Friend,

I Received in due time your laſt letter. Should have ſent the concluſion of my manuſcript, but it has been lent out, and is not yet returned.

I ſhall be glad to ſee your correſpondence with Mr *Sandeman*.—The incloſed is a copy of a letter, which I ſent ſome years ago, to two malefactors under ſentence of death.—It is got into a good many hands. Some would have me print it. I wiſh you would be ſo kind as to reviſe it, and give me your opinion.—People ſay, there is not enough ſaid concerning the ſpiritual change, or the new heart.

My next ſhall bring you a little piece of mine, which, without my knowledge, has paſſed the preſs.—I have lately been in great want of franks. But now I have got a recruit.

I have been very ill this week, but had ſtrength enough to read

* As abridged and deſigned for the Evangelical Library.

read in your book. I was much edified by Mr *Simpſon*'s ſermons. Pray, are his whole works to be procured? and are they of the ſame ſpirit with the ſermons which you have given us? If ſo, I ſhould deſire to ſee, to poſſeſs them all.

I am

Very affectionately, yours,

Weſton, Sept. 23. 1758. J. HERVEY.

My dear Friend,

EXcuſe me for keeping your *MS.* * ſo long; I have been extremely ill. This morning I have been up for four hours, and in all that time not able to look into a book, or hold up my head.

I fully aſſent to your opinion. Think you have proved the warrant for a ſinner's application of CHRIST very ſatisfactorily.—If I live, I ſhould much deſire a copy of this your correſpondence, when you have reviſed and finiſhed it. Or do you intend to print it?

Have you got ſome complete ſets of all your works? If you have, I wiſh you would lodge about four of them at Mr *R——n*'s. Let them be only in ſheets. And when you have given me notice, that they are depoſited with him, I will order him to pay you a guinea for them. I promiſed a worthy clergyman a ſet, ſome days ago.

Yours affectionately,

Weſton, Dec. 2. J. HERVEY.

Dear Mr CUDWORTH,

I AM ſo weak, I am ſcarcely able to write my name †.

Dec. 15, 1758. J. HERVEY.

A

* The remaining part of my correſpondence with Mr *Sandeman*.

† Hearing how dangerouſly ill Mr *Hervey* was, I wrote to remind him of leaving ſomething under his hand in regard to his writings, as he knew the ſituation of them *now* required it; and this was all the anſwer he could give me.

A

DEFENCE

OF

THERON and *ASPASIO*,

AGAINST THE

Objections contained in a late Treatise, entitled, *Letters on Theron and Aspasio.*

THE sum and substance of the doctrine pleaded for by *Aspasio*, is, "That God hath so given "eternal life in his Son, to guilty sinners, as that "they are fully warranted to receive Christ, or assure "themselves of salvation by him alone, without wait- "ing for any inward motions, feelings, or desires, "as any way requisite in order to such a reception or "assurance."

This doctrine has been hitherto opposed under the notion, (1.) That some inward motions, feelings, or desires, were some way requisite in order thereto. That these inward motions, feelings, or desires, were the faith or reception of Christ spoken of in the scripture; or at least the indications of it; and must be discerned in us, in that light, before there can be any well-grounded assurance of salvation by him. (2.) That if we are called directly to live by Christ, or appropriate him, he is ours and we are safe, whether we appropriate him or no. (3.) That it is assuring ourselves of what, for ought we know, is absolutely false. (4.) That the wicked, the presumptuous, and the hypocrites, may, and do often, thus assure them-

ſelves. (5.) That there is nothing in faith, thus underſtood or exerted, which is a proper ſpring and cauſe of good works, by which it is in itſelf different from a falſe faith. (6.) That it is contrary to all ſelf-examination, and aſſurance thereby. And, (7.) That ſuch doctrine is a great diſcouragement to weak ſouls.

In anſwer to all this, we have aſſerted, (1.) That the divine revelation concerning Jeſus is addreſſed to ſinners, the world, the loſt, and that without being directed to wait for any inward motions, feelings, or deſires: remiſſion of ſins and eternal life in Chriſt, are ſaid to be preſented or given to them; and they are immediately called to believe on him as ſo granted. That the inward motions, feelings, or deſires, correſpondent to theſe goſpel-declarations, are motions, deſires, *&c.* to live by Chriſt alone, immediately, without waiting for any thing previous thereto. And that this voice of God, in theſe declarations of the goſpel, was a ſufficient authority for the whole we plead for, without waiting for any inward motions or excellencies in us to add thereto. (2.) That it is very abſurd, to infer, that Chriſt being given for us to feed upon, or live by, that there is therefore no need to live by him. Nor is it (3.) aſſuring ourſelves of what may be falſe; the divine declaration having ſecured this, that they which believe on him ſhall not be confounded; nor does any man thus live by Chriſt alone, but he who is choſen to ſalvation by the belief of the truth. Notwithſtanding many deceive themſelves, profeſſing great confidence, but it is in ſome undue mixture or addition of their own to what God hath ſpoken. And, (4.) that it is here the preſumptuous and the hypocrite do err and deſtroy themſelves, and not in believing according to that which is ſpoken. (5.) That good works are works of love to God, thus manifeſted, and therefore it is the only principle of good works on this account: *We love him, becauſe he firſt loved us.* So that it differs from a falſe faith, as

the

the belief of a truth differs from the belief of a falſehood; and as an apprehenſion of the divine favour begets love and obedience rather than an apprehenſion of wrath. (6.) That a proper ſelf-examination is therefore, whether we thus live by Chriſt alone, or whether we are waiting for ſomething more? And, (7.) that it is far from diſcouraging the chiefeſt ſinners, to let them know, that God hath given to them eternal life in his Son, altho' it very poſſibly may, and ought to diſcourage every one from ſeeking relief in themſelves, while the divine declarations point us ſo plainly to the ſalvation given in Chriſt Jeſus to the guilty.

We have now to engage with another kind of an opponent, one that tells us, "That on account of our thus pleading for aſſurance of ſalvation, by receiving or appropriating Chriſt as given to us, we are alſo to be claſſed with the popular preachers, in as much as we alſo lead the guilty as they do, to ſeek after ſome inward motions, feelings, or deſires, as ſome way requiſite, in order to acceptance with God, not underſtanding how God can appear juſt to an unrighteous perſon, in juſtifying him as he at preſent ſtands, without ſome motion in his will, *&c.* That the whole doctrine of the popular preachers is deviſed for producing, animating, and directing this motion, that ſo the anxious hearer may find, about himſelf, ſome diſtinguiſhing reaſon why the Deity may regard him more than others. That the work finiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt in his death, proved by his reſurrection, is all-ſufficient to juſtify the guilty. That the whole benefit of this event, is conveyed to men, only, by the apoſtolic report concerning it.—And that this whole benefit is no more than a poſſibility of ſalvation, depending upon the divine ſovereignty. That every one who underſtands this report to be true, or is perſuaded that the event actually happened, as teſtified by the apoſtles, is juſtified, and finds relief to his guilty conſcience, *i. e.*

the relief of the above-mentioned poſſibility. That ſuch are relieved, not by finding any favourable ſymptoms about their own heart, but by finding their report to be true. That all the divine power which operates on the minds of men, either to give the firſt relief to their conſciences, or to influence them in every part of their obedience, is perſuaſive power, or the forcible conviction of truth. That our primary notion of the divine character, can give no comfort to the guilty, but, on the contrary, make them miſerable by a ſenſe of fear and ſhame. That when a man knows how God may be juſt, in juſtifying him as he at preſent ſtands, he finds relief from the aforementioned diſquieting fear."

To this we reply in general, That we agree to the greater part, to almoſt all theſe aſſertions, as moſt valuable truths, and ſtand corrected by ſome of them, particularly, where-ever we have too charitably ſuppoſed or admitted a belief of the report, contrary to the ſcripture-declaration, *They that know thy name will put their truſt in thee* *; and thereby have been ſometimes † led to fall in with the multitude, who make light of the belief of the report, as a common thing; whereas, to know the real truth of the goſpel, in diſtinction from every corrupting and contradictory falſehood, is the peculiar teaching of God; and every one that has ſo *heard and learned of the Father, comes to CHRIST.* We agree, that "our primary "notion of the divine character makes the guilty mi- "ſerable, by a ſenſe of fear and ſhame." But we deny, that relief from this fear is obtained without being as certain that we have righteouſneſs, as we are that

* Mr *Hervey* had begun a correction of his three laſt dialogues in this view, as mentioned in the letter, p. 324.

† *Sometimes*, for the force of truth frequently prevailed againſt this miſtake, before Mr *Sandeman*'s performance appeared.

that we have guilt. The divine declaration of Chriſt, given to be believed on, affords a foundation for this certainty; and contains, therefore, more than ſuch a poſſibility as is above mentioned. We alſo deny the charge, that we lead the guilty, as the popular preachers do, to ſeek after ſome inward motions, feelings, or deſires, as ſome way requiſite, in order to acceptance with God. For notwithſtanding the righteouſneſs appropriated relates to acceptance with God, the appropriation we plead for, relates only to the conſciouſneſs, knowledge, and enjoyment of that righteouſneſs whereby the guilty are juſtified. And we affirm, that to receive a gift, is no pre-requiſite or condition, as ſuch receiving has no exiſtence without the thing received; and to be ſo enriched, is not to be enriched by our act of receiving, or what we do, but only by what we receive. But as Mr *Sandeman*'s attack well deſerves a more particular defence, we conſider it as follows:

"Has our favourite author then at leaſt ſo far loſt "ſight of the imputed righteouſneſs, as to mix ano-"ther with it? Has he ſo embarraſſed, or rather ſhut "up our acceſs to the divine righteouſneſs, as to hold "forth a preliminary human one, as ſome way ex-"pedient, or rather neceſſary, to our enjoying the "comforts and benefits of it?" *Letters on Theron and Aſpaſio*, p. 4. *

No, far from it; but as the pinching point in the conſcience is not, that there is no ſuch righteouſneſs in being as pleaſeth God; but that WE have no ſuch righteouſneſs; ſo, we underſtand the comfort and benefit of Chriſt's righteouſneſs to be, that it is a ſufficient righteouſneſs in OUR behalf. And we who plead for the divine grant of this righteouſneſs to ſinners, as ſuch, very evidently maintain, that there is no preliminary righteouſneſs neceſſary to ſuch a concluſion.

"I

* *N. B.* Mr *Sandeman*'s words are included with the commas, the other paragraphs are the reply.

"I speak of those teachers, who, having largely "insisted on the corruption of human nature, con- "cluded the whole world guilty before God, elo- "quently set forth the necessity of an atonement, "zealously maintained the scripture-doctrine con- "cerning the person and work of Christ; yet, after "all, leave us as much in the dark as to our comfort, "as if Jesus Christ had never appeared; and mark "out as insuperable a task for us, as if he had not fi- "nished his work." p. 8, 9.

This charge may be very properly exhibited against those teachers who leave us as much in the dark as they found us, unless we can find out something within ourselves to distinguish us from other sinners. But *Aspasio*'s doctrine brings Christ near to guilty sinners, as such, for their immediate enjoyment. Take and have, receive and possess, relates only to personal enjoyment, is no task, no entitling condition; the appropriation being fully warranted by the truth believed, and effected by the belief of it.

"While, with great assiduity and earnestness, they "are busied in describing to us, animating us with "various encouragements, and furnishing us with "manifold instructions, how to perform that strange "something which is to make out our connection "with Christ, and bring his righteousness home to "us." p. 9.

We say, Christ's righteousness is "brought home "to us," in the gospel-declaration; without the necessity of any intervening righteousness to warrant us to call it ours. We only receive what is freely given; that is all the strange something we have pleaded for; and that not for our acceptance with God in virtue of our act, but only to know and enjoy that righteousness as ours, on account of which alone we are accepted.

"Setting them to work to do something, under "whatever

"whatever name, to make up their peace with God." *Ibid.*

Not so with us, who receive and live by Christ's righteousness, with which God hath declared himself already well pleased.

"Every doctrine which teaches us to do or endea-
"vour any thing toward our acceptance with God,
"stands opposed to the doctrine of the apostles." p. 11.

But the doctrine we plead for, teaches us to live by what Christ has already done, as being given to us for that purpose. To say that I must do, or endeavour any thing that I may be accepted, is a contradiction to that believing on Christ we plead for; which is, in fact, neither more nor less, than living upon him as our whole, only, and complete salvation; and will, on that account, bear the test of the apostle's word, *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly*, &c. As this faith cannot be separated from the truth believed, nor the truth believed from Christ the subject of that truth, so to be justified by faith, by Christ, or by his blood, is the same thing. Nor can any doing for acceptance be charged upon this believing on Christ, while its native language is, *In the Lord have I righteousness*.

* *Palæmon*'s main argument is, "If the work fi-
"nished by Jesus Christ is alone sufficient to justifica-
"tion, then no appropriation or reception is neces-
"sary thereto." We reply, that that alone is sufficient; therefore reception or appropriation belongs to our conscious possession and enjoyment of the justifying righteousness, to the manifestation of our justification by it, and to the influence of it in our lives and conversations.

Palæmon thinks he does not deny the sufficiency of Christ,

* The name the author of the letters has chosen for himself, as Mr *Hervey* is to be understood by *Aspasio*.

Chriſt, when he connects faith and ſalvation together, and maintains, that all who believe this ſufficiency will be ſaved, and all who believe it not, will periſh.

He admits, that a work of God is neceſſary in the juſtified, that is to beget faith, to beget in them a perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of the juſtifying righteouſneſs.

He judges this cannot be a contradiction to the one thing needful alone, becauſe it is wholly a perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of that alone, without more. In what light then are we to conſider this farther work of God, in perſuading us of the ſufficiency of this righteouſneſs? Not as an addition to the ſufficient righteouſneſs, but only as relative to the knowledge of it. He is juſtified by believing only as he is juſtified by what he believes.

Neither does he think he denies the ſufficient righteouſneſs, when he maintains faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience, as neceſſary to demonſtrate his portion in this righteouſneſs, or that he is a juſtified perſon. Becauſe in theſe acts, or in this obedience, he is not doing ſomething to be juſtified, but proceeding in the way "*of painful deſire and fear*," in order to *know* himſelf to be juſtified.

Hence it is apparent, that he muſt be obliged to allow, that altho' the work finiſhed by Chriſt on the croſs, is the *ſole requiſite* to juſtification; yet, in this view, *ſomething more* is neceſſary to the *knowledge* of his intereſt in this righteouſneſs, or of his juſtification by it. And that to maintain this, is no contradiction to the *ſole requiſite*, but a procedure upon it. What he is obliged to plead for himſelf, he muſt alſo allow to us; and the difference between us is not in regard of the *ſole requiſite*, but our preſent *enjoyment* of it, or the *knowledge* of our juſtification by this alone. He ſays, with the multitude, "in the way of painful de-"ſire and fear," till we come to the knowledge of the difference God has made between us and others; we ſay, by the free grant of the goſpel, to the abſolutely guilty without difference. The

"The doctrine of the apoſtles, inſtead of directing "us what to do, ſets before us all that the moſt diſ-"quieted conſcience can require, in order to accept-"ance with God, as already done and finiſhed by "Jeſus Chriſt." p. 11.

A diſquieted conſcience requires a righteouſneſs pleaſing to God in *its own* behalf. No righteouſneſs will quiet my conſcience, unleſs I conſider it as a righteouſneſs *for me*. The righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God, is already done and finiſhed by Jeſus Chriſt. *Palæmon* conſiders this righteouſneſs as reſpecting himſelf, only as far as he diſcovers his own faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience. We conſider it as given to the abſolutely guilty, warranting ſuch to live by it, as ſo given to them for that purpoſe.

Palæmon's notion, that God hath appointed no way, but by our works, to be aſſured of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, renders his doing, endeavouring, ſtriving, *&c.* ſcarcely different in any thing from doing that we may live. There are few ſo weak as to think they can alter God's mind or purpoſe by their performances. But not knowing what he has purpoſed, they *do*, that they may obtain ſatisfaction in their minds about their ſalvation; and *Palæmon*'s doing ſeems to be wholly of this ſort, that is, in fact, *for* peace with God, and not *from* it.

"What Chriſt has done, is that which pleaſeth "God; what he hath done, is that which quiets the "guilty conſcience of man as ſoon as he knows it." *Ibid.*

As ſoon as he knows it reſpects him a guilty ſinner. If the fear of the guilty conſcience, conſiſted only in an uncertainty of their being any righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God in the behalf of the elect, or the qualified, then the guilty conſcience would be quieted as ſoon as it is evident there is ſuch a righteouſneſs. But this is not the caſe; the fear of the guilty conſcience is a dread of God, becauſe I have no ſuch righteouſ-

neſs; becauſe I have no righteouſneſs, upon which I can be aſſured he is pleaſed with me. And this guilty conſcience cannot be quieted, unleſs I diſcover the righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God in my own behalf.

As we conceive the report of the goſpel of ſufficient righteouſneſs, freely given in Jeſus, ſuits the guilty conſcience thus underſtood; ſo we agree, that whenever we hear of this proviſion of divine grace, we have no occaſion for any other queſtion but this, "Is it true or not? If we find it true, we are happy;" and it is *Palæmon*, and not we, that ſtands in need of another righteouſneſs to quiet the guilty conſcience.

Palæmon conſiders "the work of Chriſt as a ſuf-"ficient foundation whereon to reſt the whole weight "of our acceptance with God," p. 12. while at the ſame time he aſſerts, that his own part or lot in this righteouſneſs "is not ſo eaſily ſettled;" p. 13. but that he muſt wait, and work for it in the way of "painful deſire and fear, till he is at the laſt crowned "with enjoyment," in a clear diſcovery of his having faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience, p. 419. We judge ourſelves not left to this uncertainty; and that, without the diſcovery of any ſuch difference betwixt us and other men, we are allowed to receive, enjoy, and live upon Jeſus Chriſt, as freely given to ſinners in the goſpel. Even as thoſe who are invited to an entertainment, are freely allowed to partake of what is ſet before them. *Palæmon*'s view of the goſpel-report, ſets him at a diſtance from enjoyment, or leaves him in uncertainty, till his obedience manifeſts a difference betwixt him and others. Our view is of the ſufficient righteouſneſs, brought quite home, ſo that our firſt act is to live by it, that in the ſtrength thereof we may be influenced by love to him that firſt loved us.

It is true, the ſcripture "no where aſcertains that "Chriſt died for me in particular." But it allows, invites, and commands me a guilty ſinner, without more,

more, to believe on him, live by him, &c, phrases evidently expressive of the appropriation, trust, or confidence we plead for.

Our author says, "That Christ died, that he gave "his life a ransom for many, is, indeed, a truth fully "ascertained in the scriptures,—for the relief of the "shipwrecked and desperate." But can it relieve any farther than it respects ourselves? And if the gospel-declaration concerning this righteousness doth not respect us any farther than as we apprehend we may be of the elect, or that we have their qualifications, how does it relieve the shipwrecked and the desperate? It rather relieves the elect and the qualified. This point seems to be Mr *Sandeman*'s mystery, and he guards the inquiry with something like, Hence ye profane! "The "world (says he) will always be objecting thus." A plain acknowledgment, I think, that *that* is the question to be answered, or the guilty conscience cannot be believed; and a vindication of our view of the gospel-report, as furnishing us with the gracious answer.

"The scripture often affirms the final perdition of "many, not merely hearers of the gospel, but who "have heard and received it with joy." *Ibid.*

This is an objection against depending on any thing I at present feel, but not against complying with the divine invitation to live by the sufficient righteousness of the Son of God; an objection against the certainty which arises from inherent qualifications; but not against that which proceeds solely on the divine invitation and faithfulness.

"Many shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." *Ibid.*

Because they seek not by faith (by the *truth* of the gospel,) but as it were by the works of the law.

"Notwithstanding their great confidence about "their acquaintance with Christ, and their interest in "him, and their experience of his presence with them; "he will at last say unto them, *I never knew you, de-"part from me.*" *Ibid.*

The confidence of thoſe condemned, is evidently, not a confidence built upon the finiſhed work of Chriſt, given to them, or the divine faithfulneſs pledged to ſinners in the goſpel report; but a confidence on their own attainments and experience, wherein they judged themſelves peculiarly entitled to the heavenly admiſſion.

Let who will be condemned, it is allowed by Mr *Sandeman*, that every believer of the ſufficiency of the work of Chriſt, to juſtify the ungodly, is juſtified. And it is very evident, that whoever lives by that, as ſufficient for him, believes that ſufficiency, and is really ſaved by what he believes, though ten thouſand profeſſors periſh.

"When they are condemned then as hypocrites "and unbelievers, they are not condemned for want "of *Aſpaſio*'s faith; and that for theſe two reaſons; "the firſt is, it was never true that Chriſt died for "them; the ſecond is, they were not faulty in this "reſpect, for the ſacred text deſcribes them as rather "too confident about their intereſt in Chriſt." p. 14.

As to the firſt, it is not *Aſpaſio*'s faith that Chriſt died for them, whether they believe it or no; and as to the ſecond, they may be condemned for neglecting or rejecting the goſpel-grant of a Saviour to the guilty; which is the truth *Aſpaſio* pleads for, and, at the ſame time, too confident upon their imagined attainments on which they found their hopes.

"The goſpel propoſes nothing to be believed by "us, but what is infallibly true, whether we believe "it or not." *Ibid.*

But it propoſes ſomething to be immediately received and enjoyed by us, without performing any entitling condition whatever. We plead for ſuch a perſuaſion as is the reception of a gift; and what we thus receive, or aſſure ourſelves of, depends for its truth (or infallible certainty) on the veracity and faithfulneſs of God, who has promiſed ſuch ſhall not be confounded.

founded. We agree, that a perſuaſion of a propoſition, true in itſelf, muſt be grounded on the evidence of that truth. But this is not the caſe, when we are commanded to believe on, or truſt in the Lord.

" The goſpel, which foretells the final perdition of " ſo many of its hearers, ſo many ſeriouſly and zea- " louſly exerciſed about it, can never warrant us, to " perſuade every one who hears it, that Chriſt died " for him." *Ibid.*

The goſpel, which foretells the final perdition of ſo many of its hearers, at the ſame time warrants every hearer to live by the righteouſneſs it reveals; and aſſures them of eternal ſalvation who thus believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or live by his righteouſneſs alone, without more.

" Unleſs we ſhall ſay, that Chriſt died for every " individual of mankind, and conſequently, that none " of mankind owe their ſalvation wholly to his death." *Ibid.*

They owe their ſalvation, and aſcribe their ſalvation, wholly to his death, who live, and found all their hopes on that alone. Beſides, our appropriation relates only to our conſcious poſſeſſion or enjoyment of that which juſtifies, and therefore is no more liable to the above-mentioned objection, than *Palæmon*'s working to the ſame end, in a way of painful deſire and fear, till he is crowned with enjoyment. If a man receives 10,000*l.* as a gift, does the act exiſt without the gift? And is it the act that enriches him, or the riches he receives? We on both ſides plead for the conſcious enjoyment of the divine righteouſneſs. He, that we enjoy from our conſciouſneſs of our acts of obedience, *&c.* We, by a diſcovery of the ſufficient righteouſneſs granted indefinitely to the guilty, in ſuch a manner, as warrants each one's particular application. Who ſtands freeſt from the doctrine of ſelf-dependence, I leave others to judge.

In the ſecond letter, our author wiſhes *Aſpaſio*'s faith

faith had been "equally precious with the apoſtolic." p. 18. As the difference between his faith and ours is, that we believe the righteouſneſs which pleaſeth God, is given to us guilty ſinners immediately, to live by as our own, which he does not; his faith does not in that reſpect appear to be more precious, or more apoſtolic.

It is true, "the apoſtles never taught men to make "one ſtep of advance towards God, on the proſpect "that God would condeſcend and come down the "reſt of the infinite diſtance to meet them." p. 23.

And this may be a ſuitable argument againſt thoſe who ſpend their time in offering Chriſt upon certain terms or conditions to be performed by the ſinner. But this is far from being the caſe in what we plead for. Chriſt or his righteouſneſs, does not meet our believing application, but is the object of it, the thing applied. It is Chriſt, and his righteouſneſs, that is immediately received, applied, or accounted ours, as being freely given or granted in the goſpel-report. So that our appropriation terminates in its object, and can no more exiſt without Chriſt, than eating can without food. Is it proper to ſay, that in eating, a man makes only a ſtep of advance towards his food, on the proſpect that the food ſhall meet him? Juſt as improper to apply ſuch repreſentations to the appropriation pleaded for.

The apoſtles called men to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in ſuch a manner of addreſs, as is inconſiſtent with intending thereby only ſuch convictions as are purely paſſive; only ſuch as force themſelves upon the mind by the evidence of their truth. The apoſtolic language is, *Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jeſus Chriſt, for the remiſſion of ſins*, Acts ii. 38. *And with many other words did he teſtify and exhort, ſaying, Save yourſelves from this untoward generation*, 40. And again, *Repent ye therefore, and be converted*, chap. iii. 19. And again, *To him gave all the prophets witneſs, that thro' his name, whoſoever*

ever believeth in him, shall receive remission of sins, chap. x. 43. And again, *Be it known unto you, therefore, men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you the forgiveness of sin. And by him all that believe are justified*, chap. xiii. 38, 39. And again, *Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved*, &c. chap. xvi. 31. In all these instances, there is something exhorted to, called believing on, or in Christ; being baptized in his name for remission of sins; repenting, and being converted; something more than passive conviction, and, at the same time, something consistent with the alone sufficiency of Christ's righteousness, which can be neither more nor less, than the appropriation, trust, or confidence we plead for.

That "the promises of the gospel are made only to "believers," will never invalidate our plea for appropriation, while it remains true, that the grant of Christ, and the salvation in him, is made to sinners; and in receiving the grant, they evidently commence those to whom the promises are made; that is, those who believe on Christ according to the apostolic exhortation. And to sinners, thus immediately believing on Christ, the promises are made; first, to encourage such to draw near and live with confidence on the sufficient righteousness; secondly, to give them a certainty dependent upon the divine faithfulness, and animating thereby to the most ready and willing obedience.

To say no one must account the righteousness of Christ as belonging to him, in any sense, until he discovers himself a true believer, as it excludes the application we plead for, so, in its room, it introduces all the pernicious consequences this author professes to avoid in his accusation of *Aspasio, viz.* "holding forth "a preliminary human righteousness as some way ex-"pedient, or rather necessary, to our enjoying the "comfort and benefit of Christ's." Unless *Palæmon* can make it manifest that we enjoy the comfort and benefit

benefit of Christ's righteousness, while we are, according to him, "working in the way of painful de-"sire and fear, till we come to that enjoyment;" common experience teacheth us, that righteousness can only relieve or comfort us, as far as it respects us. That he is able to save his elect, is no comfort to me, further than I conceive myself to be one of them; and in this case I am comforted, either by a conjectural hope, or by a hope founded on the difference there is betwixt me and others.

"And to obviate the difficulty, how shall I know "that the promise is to me! they address their bre-"thren in this manner: In the name of the great "God we declare, that the promise is to thee, and "thee, O man, woman, whosoever thou art." p. 23.

The promise of salvation, to whosoever believes on Christ, is evidently to the sinner, as his encouragement to come to the sure enjoyment of the righteousness and salvation given in him, by receiving, appropriating, and trusting confidently on him as so given.

"In his name, we call you this moment to stretch "forth the withered hand, and the withered heart, "and take hold of Christ, saying, *He is mine, and I* "*am his.*" *Ibid.*

That may be understood thus; "We speak not in our own name, as signifying our own importance, but inform you of the glad tidings, that it is God's command, and your duty, not to wait to feel some power or alteration in yourself, as a ground for your confidence, but just as you are, in obedience to the divine command, receive or appropriate Christ, saying, *He is mine, and I am his.*"

The withered hand and the withered heart, are expressions used to signify a powerless, helpless condition, which, consisting in the prevalence of our naturally-evil dispositions, serves to denominate us sinners, and spoils our hopes of living by our own performances; yet it is no objection against living by his obedience

obedience who hath become the righteouſneſs of the guilty. For it muſt be remembered, we are not juſtified by our acts, but by the righteouſneſs we appropriate; and our appropriation only ſerves to give us the divinely-authentic enjoyment by the word, of that juſtification of the ungodly, and without ſtrength, whereby we are ſaved. Hence we are called not to wait for ſtrength to do ſomething for the enjoyment of this juſtification, but ſtretch forth the withered hand, or juſt as we are, to live by Chriſt's righteouſneſs, when we feel nothing but what marks us out for eternal deſtruction. When *Lazarus* was made to hear, he came forth, according to the command he heard, or in obedience to the voice that quickened him; and when we are made to hear the divine invitation and command to live by this righteouſneſs, we appropriate it in obedience to him that makes us hear his voice. The righteouſneſs itſelf, is that by which we are accepted; the appropriation reſpects our poſſeſſion and enjoyment. In the latter we may be weaker or ſtronger; in the former, is the invariable ground of our confidence.

That God has given to us eternal life in his Son, is the apoſtolic ſtyle, and the very record which is pointed out for our peculiar attention; and when the word *offer* has been made uſe of, and underſtood to convey nothing more than this important truth, the believer of the record has become the receiver of the gift, or the enjoyer of the bleſſing.

"Hence we ſee, that *This is mine*, or *this was done* "*for me*, is a truth, whoſe evidence takes its riſe from "the pains I take to believe it." p. 26.

Its evidence depends on the veracity and faithfulneſs of him who ſpake the world into being, has provided the ſufficient righteouſneſs, and has commanded us to give him this honour of depending on his word, in our enjoyment of this ſalvation.

It is not in this caſe the language of the belief of a

truth, but of the reception or appropriation of a free gift; the belief of the truth of the ſufficiency of Jeſus Chriſt, and of his being freely given, goes before, and is that knowledge of the name of the Lord which emboldens us to put our truſt in him. What we thus aſſure ourſelves of, in compliance with the divine invitation, *&c.* as it is a certain truth in the divine mind, ſo it appears a truth by the divine word, when it is evident I am begotten to this Chriſtian faith, hope, and charity. The difference here between us is, that, with *Palæmon*, *This is mine, this was done for me*, is a truth, whoſe evidence takes its riſe only from a diſcovery, that I am diſtinguiſhed from other ſinners by my faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience. With us it is the language of a reception, appropriation, truſt, or confidence, grounded upon the divine declarations to ſinners for that purpoſe.

"This, I muſt ſay, is indeed a very ſtrange and "uncommon way of finding truth." *Ibid.*

But ſuch a way of dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulneſs as becomes us, and gives glory to God.—It is the reception of a gift by a perſuaſion of the mind.—It is truſting to the faithfulneſs of God to make out, in this particular caſe, a bleſſing indefinitely promiſed; not aſſuring myſelf of a propoſition being true, but of eternal ſalvation, by a Saviour, given to me.

To receive a gift, or to partake of any thing upon invitation, is nothing ſtrange or uncommon. In this caſe, when the gift is given in divine declarations, and the reception of it purely mental, an anſwerable perſuaſion of the mind, or (in dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulneſs) an aſſuring ourſelves of the bleſſing granted; what we are perſuaded of is in a way *peculiar* to itſelf, and very conſiſtent before him, who ſaid, *Whatſoever things ye deſire when you pray, believe that you receive them, and ye have them.* *Palæmon* will allow, that Chriſt's death is an uncommon

mon affair, as is alſo imputing righteouſneſs without works, *&c.* Why then ſhould the *peculiarity* of thus enjoying righteouſneſs without works, be ſo much the ſubject of ſneer, becauſe accounted *ſtrange* and *uncommon?*—May it not rather be accounted ſuch a way of dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulneſs, as renders him his proper glory?

"If he (namely Chriſt) died for them that periſh, "then the happineſs of them who are ſaved, muſt be "owing to ſomething elſe beſide his death." *Ibid.*

Aſpaſio is no farther concerned here, than as he maintains, that Chriſt is given for the guilty to appropriate and live by. And in this regard, may it not be ſaid, with as much propriety, If an entertainment, provided in common, is refuſed by ſome, that then the nouriſhment of thoſe who partake of it, is owing to ſomething elſe beſides the food? this coming pretty near to our Lord's repreſentation, *John* vi. 53. A fallacy or impropriety charged upon the former, is alſo a reflection upon the latter.

If we underſtand, by the happineſs of them who are ſaved, their redemption from the wrath to come, and title to future glory; this is owing ſtrictly to his perfect righteouſneſs. If we mean their preſent happineſs in a conſcious poſſeſſion, knowledge, or enjoyment of this redemption; this we may ſay is owing to his death, given to be received. *Palæmon* ſays, to a diſcovery of our faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience.

It is a very juſt obſervation, That "in ſpeaking of "the redemption that is in Jeſus Chriſt, we had need "keep clear of all human ſyſtems, and hold cloſe by "the ſcriptures." p. 30.

And it is in ſtrict conformity to this we aſſert, that although God has given eternal life in his Son, even unto them, who, by diſbelieving it, make God a liar; yet no man has that life, but he that has the Son. God gives being to that which he commands, autho-

riſes, and thereby enables us to receive, appropriate, or be perſuaded of. And if we admit of his character as a juſt God and a Saviour, in juſtifying the ungodly, why ſhould we object thus giving him the glory of his power and faithfulneſs? Thus *SARAH received ſtrength to conceive ſeed,—becauſe ſhe judged him* (not only able, but) *faithful that had promiſed.*—And thus our Lord ſpeaks, *Mark* xi. 22, 23, 24. Shall it be diſputed, whether God can give an exiſtence to things that yet are not, and make out that to be true, which we, according to his word, depend upon him for? This confidence is due to God only, and is giving him glory. On the other hand, to ſuppoſe this cannot be, and, on this account, to ſet aſide this manner of *believing* or *truſting* in him, is to rob him of his proper glory.

This perſuaſion may properly be called TRUSTING in the Lord, becauſe it proceeds neither on pre-evidence, nor inward qualifications, but on God's bare word of invitation, promiſe, *&c.* taking that as a ſufficient authority and ſecurity. By this a proper dependence of the creature on the Creator is preſerved and kept up. And unleſs it can, without miſrepreſentation, be ſhewn inconſiſtent and antiſcriptural; all other objections raiſed againſt it are but of ſmall account; and labour to form it into a propoſition, true in itſelf, whether we believe it or no, is the labour of diffidence and unbelief. For it is plain, they cannot truſt to God's invitations, commands, and declarations; and are ſeeking a reaſon of hope more agreeable to themſelves.

"*Aſpaſio* maintains, that none have the proper ſcrip-
"tural faith, but thoſe who are taught by the en-
"lightening Spirit to draw the concluſion." p. 34.

Aſpaſio maintains, that "when the divine Spirit opens our eyes, *&c.* we diſcover and make uſe of the ſame right or warrant as is the privilege of the vileſt miſcreant; a right founded, not on our awakened deſires,

fires, but purely, solely, entirely on the free grant of a Saviour." *Dialogues*, vol. ii. p. 361.

"They maintain, that reprobates have as fair a re-
"vealed warrant, to draw the conclusion, as the elect
"have." *Ibid.*

That is, that no man need to wait to see his election, or, in other words, any difference between himself and other men, to warrant his confidence in Christ. The general indefinite expressions, contained in the declarations of the gospel, such as *whosoever*, *any man*, *he that believeth on him*, *&c.* fully authorising or warranting *he*, *any man*, *whosoever* he be, to *believe*, or *trust confidently on Christ alone* for everlasting life. Being taught of God this truth, he lives by Christ as the Saviour of the lost, even as being taught the sufficiency of Christ he lives by that alone.

In the third letter, our author mistakes the real question between us. It is not, "Whether or not
"did Christ finish upon the cross, all that God re-
"quires, every requisite, without exception, to pro-
"cure acceptance for, and give relief unto the guilty
"conscience of the most profane wretch that lives?" p. 41. 42.

This is not disputed by us, but maintained more properly on our side than by our author. The question between us, is, Whether the guilty conscience can be relieved from the sentence of condemnation, by the consideration of a sufficient righteousness for the elect and the qualified? Or, Whether God hath not provided for the relief of the guilty conscience, by giving his only begotten Son that we might live through him? giving him not only to die, but giving him in the divine declarations to be believed on?

"It must be the very same thing which placates
"divine justice, or which fully expresses the neces-
"sary opposition of infinite goodness to evil or sin,
"that relieves the sinner from the sentence of con-
"demnation,

" demnation, which is no other than the voice of " God naturally reſiding in the conſcience." *Ibid.*

As it would be very abſurd to ſuppoſe it placates the divine juſtice, without being conſidered by that juſtice in the behalf of the tranſgreſſor; ſo it ſeems to be equally abſurd, that it can " relieve the guilty " conſcience from the ſentence of condemnation," without being appropriated by that conſcience.

The ſentence of condemnation, naturally reſiding in the conſcience, requires a revelation of righteouſneſs, that I may as really impute to myſelf, as the ſin that condemns me, or the condemnation ſtill remains untouched. A poſſibility, that I may be an elect perſon, cannot give relief, becauſe it may be ten to one it is not true. My hope is only in proportion, as I apprehend many, or few, to be elected; and, after all, it is not, in fact, Chriſt's righteouſneſs that relieves me, but my conjectural or fond hope of being one of elect.

Chriſt did finiſh upon the croſs that righteouſneſs " which placates the divine juſtice, or which fully " expreſſes the neceſſary oppoſition of infinite good- " neſs to evil, or ſin." That righteouſneſs which alone can relieve the ſinner from eternal death, entitle him to eternal life, and bring peace and hope of everlaſting life to the moſt guilty conſcience. At the ſame time, it would be abſurd to ſay, Chriſt finiſhed on the croſs every requiſite or commandment relative to this righteouſneſs as preached or declared in the world. For inſtance; *He hath commanded all men every where to repent.* Which I underſtand a repentance reſpective of this righteouſneſs, and the ſame with the *commandment, that we ſhould believe on the name of his Son Jeſus Chriſt.* Again, the voice from heaven, *This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleaſed,* was attended with a commandment to *hear him*, agreeable to *Iſ.* li. 1,—5. If it is again inquired, of what avail are theſe commandments? It may be anſwered, as

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the commandment to preach the gospel to every creature, availed to be the savour of life unto life in them that are saved, and of death unto death in them that perish; so the commandment to believe on the name of his Son Jesus Christ, avails to encourage and warrant the sinner, as such, to trust, believe in, or appropriate and enjoy that righteousness. I am persuaded *Palæmon* will not say, that Christ finished upon the cross any of the commmandments above mentioned. As it may be affirmed on the other hand, that the obedience to these commands is no part of that *righteousness* which procures acceptance for, or gives relief unto the conscience of the most profane wretch that lives. But *Palæmon*'s reply is, That all obedience to these commands, supposes the belief of the gospel-report. Be it so, the commandment speaks to them, not as to believers, or to the distinguished among mankind, but as to sinners or children of wrath, even as others; and is the divine method of grace in giving us a conscious possession or enjoyment. Which *Palæmon* seeks totally by works.

"What is the *turning-point* from despair to good "hope?" *Ibid.*

The finished work of Christ alone. How is that our hope? As it is given for that purpose to be the hope of the guilty.

"*Aspasio*'s faith rests, one foot on the work of "Christ, and the other on human efforts, or the mo-"tions of man's heart." *Ibid.*

Quite a mistake. *Aspasio*'s faith is, that the work of Christ is given to him; on this he rests, and on no motions of his heart whatever.

"What gives right to eternal life? The imputed "righteousness. What gives right to that? The "work of faith. Who have a right to act faith? "Those who feel an aversion to sin," *&c.* p. 44.

This is also far from being *Aspasio*'s view of the matter; he should be represented thus; What gives right

right to eternal life? The imputed righteouſneſs. What gives right to that? The declarations of the goſpel, giving it freely to ſinners as ſuch. Who have a right to act faith, or appropriate this righteouſneſs? All the ends of the earth; as many as can be included in the word *whoſoever*. To any of all the ends of the earth were the apoſtles commiſſioned to ſay, *Believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, and thou ſhalt be ſaved.* To exhort thus to a paſſive involuntary conviction, would be very abſurd.

Aſpaſio's obſervation is, the "grant is made to ſinners; in receiving the grant we commence believers," according to the above-mentioned apoſtolic exhortation.

"But *Aſpaſio* will ſtill inſiſt, that theſe qualifications are by no means the *ground* of their right. "Let us ſee then, where the ground of their right "lies?" p. 46.

In the divine declarations to ſinners as ſuch.

"I think the obvious meaning of *Aſpaſio*'s words is "this: theſe perſons, ſo qualified, have the right excluſive of unqualified ſinners. *Ibid.*

It is very obvious this is not his meaning.

"Where then can the ground of this right lie, but "in the diſtinguiſhed qualifications? It cannot lie in "any thing common to both; for, in that caſe, the "unqualified would have as good a right as the qualified." *Ibid.*

They have ſo. Theſe are *Aſpaſio*'s real ſentiments; whatever qualifications make a difference between one man and another, they confer no right to the kingdom of God, they confer no right to the imputed righteouſneſs. For as *all have ſinned, and come ſhort of the glory of God*, they who are juſtified, are *juſtified freely by his grace, thro' the redemption which is in Jeſus Chriſt.*

"They have nothing in the heaven above, nor in "the earth below, to keep their hearts from ſinking into

" into utter despair, but the bare propitiation. This, " and this alone, encourages them to make their ad- " dress to God." p. 48.

Can this encourage further than they see their interest in it, or right to draw near to God thereby, in virtue of his gracious declarations? And how are they to address God? As their friend and father, on account of this righteousness? Then they, in fact, appropriate it, and our debate is at an end; we are agreed. Or, do they address God only as the friend of some who are to be known in time by suitable qualifications? If this is our author's meaning, then it is he, and not *Aspasio*, that, in drawing near to God, seeks for inherent qualifications, instead of the imputed righteousness.

" By this, and this alone, God conveys the first " taste of his favour and peace into their hearts." *Ibid.*

Unless we conceive of the imputed righteousness as graciously granted unto us in this destitute condition, where is the connection? What taste of favour and peace can be admitted barely by the consideration of sufficiency for the elect? Sufficient for me a guilty sinner, without any other consideration, is evangelical. To wait for *something more* before we are allowed to call him friend or father, on account of this righteousness, is not at all adapted to bring us nigh to God by *the bare propitiation*.

" And it pleases me to find, *Aspasio* had not courage " to close this period, without bringing forth the plain " truth at last. For pointing to the poor, indigent, " and guilty sinners, he concludes, For such the Sa- " viour is provided; to such his benefits are proposed; " and on such his grace will be magnified." p. 48. 49.

If it is allowed, that his benefits are proposed to such, the debate is ended. We mean no more. It is undoubtedly warrantable to receive and appropriate what is provided for the enjoyment of *any*, or *whosoever* among the guilty; and proposed to our trust and con-

fidence under that name. If any other conſideration muſt intervene, then it is plain, the benefits are not provided for and propoſed to ſuch, but only for, and to thoſe who have the additional conſideration.

" As for the bare work finiſhed on the croſs, or the " bare report about it, however true we think it, ſo " far have we miſtaken it, that, ſetting aſide *our active* " operations about it, we do not ſee *what comfort or* " *benefit can be derived from it.*" p. 85.

This proceeds on a total miſtake and miſrepreſentation of *Aſpaſio;* he is not putting the leaſt ſlight on the report or perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of the finiſhed work of Jeſus Chriſt, to juſtify the moſt guilty without more; he is here oppoſing a qualified perſuaſion, or rather mere profeſſion, artfully ſubſtituted in the room of the ſufficient righteouſneſs, and the ſinner's living by that alone—A perſuaſion, " that the ſhelter of the ſummer-houſe is free for our uſe, accompanied with a high eſteem of its accommodation, an earneſt deſire after its protection, or an habitual tendency towards it." *Aſpaſio* aſks not whether a perſuaſion of the ſufficiency of Chriſt, but " a perſuaſion that the ſum- " mer-houſe is free for our uſe," whether this, tho' accompanied with eſteem, deſire, or tendency, unleſs " carried into actual entrance and poſſeſſion," would anſwer the end and deſign of ſuch a truth, " would " be a proper ſafe-guard, or indeed any manner of " advantage as to our perſons," that is, in reſpect of poſſeſſion, enjoyment and advantage from that enjoyment. Theſe are his very words, 16th dialogue, p. 398. And let any one impartially judge, whether *Aſpaſio* is here objecting againſt the finiſhed work of Jeſus? or rather, is he not ſetting aſide a fruitleſs perſuaſion, or rather profeſſion, that the ſhelter is free for our uſe, with dependence on our ſuppoſed eſteems, deſires, tendencies, *&c.* that the ſoul may reſt purely and entirely on Jeſus Chriſt alone? Whom in the ſame page he deſcribes from the prophet *Iſaiah*, as " a place " of

" of refuge, as a covert from the ſtorm and from " rain." *Aſpaſio* aſks, if a perſuaſion that Chriſt is ſuch a place of refuge and covert free for our uſe, accompanied with any eſteems, deſires, and tendencies, will anſwer to ſuch a repreſentation? Which is, in fact, whether we may truſt in ſuch a perſuaſion, eſteem, deſire, and tendency, inſtead of that righteouſneſs which is our appointed refuge? It is plain, all the active operations pleaded for, is to live by this alone, in diſtinction from any other dependence. And the advantage ariſing from theſe active operations, is the enjoyment, comfort, and influence of this ſufficient righteouſneſs.

If the objector had been pleading for the entire ſufficency of the works of Jeſus, *Aſpaſio* would readily agree to that, and have recommended living by that alone. But after he had ſo far co-incided with *Aſpaſio*, as to allow, " that all this grace, and each of theſe " benefits, are free, perfectly free, for you, for me, " for others;" might not *Aſpaſio* aſk, would this bare perſuaſion anſwer the end and deſign of ſuch a truth, unleſs I was induced thereby to really uſe it as a ſhelter? that is, to oppoſe Chriſt's righteouſneſs, thus freely given unto me, to every ſenſe of guilt and condemnation, and aſſure myſelf of ſalvation by that alone. As I ſuppoſe Mr *Sandeman* in his view of things, will allow the believer of the goſpel-report to oppoſe the truth of Chriſt's ſufficiency to every declaration or conviction of guilt tending to deſpair, and this may as properly be called *reducing* that truth *to practice*. This is what *Aſpaſio* calls *reducing to practice*, the truth of Chriſt being given for us to receive and live by him as ſuch a gift, as a refuge from all curſes of the law, and danger of damnation, unto the end of peace, aſſurance, and holineſs. We do not conſider the goſpel as barely furniſhing us with good and excellent materials *to work upon*, but with bleſſings *to enjoy and poſſeſs* as our own; and our whole comfort,

or any part of it, does not arise from the *success of our labour*, but wholly from the blessings so freely presented to us to take comfort in them, and is very far from making them fit to comfort us.

"Now, it does not signify much by what name "we call the mean of escape, whether we call it the "law or the gospel; for the great concern we have "with either of these, is to obtain righteousness or "a title to life." p. 92, 93.

However true this may be of those who seek by works in a way of "painful desire and fear till they "are crowned with enjoyment:" *Aspasio* is not chargeable, whose doctrine allows an immediate enjoyment, without the intervention of any righteousness or work whatever.

"For—it is not the bare knowledge of the law or "gospel that can do us any service, but *the use we* "*make of them.*" p. 93.

This is but mere sound; for our author pleads for the above-mentioned use to be made of the report, previous to the enjoyment of the privilege. The use we make of the gospel-report, is immediately to live by the righteousness it reveals: whereas the use of the law is to do that we may live. Is not here a manifest? yea, is not here a sufficient difference?

"So each one reasons thus: *Seeing many shall pe-* "*rish, and seeing the gospel says nothing to me, but* "*what it says to every one, what comfort can I reap* "*from it, unless I can find about myself, at least one* "*grain of odds, casting the balance in my favour, in* "*comparison with others, or in comparison with what* "*I myself have hitherto been?*" p. 94.

But this is not *Aspasio*'s language, which may rather be represented, *Seeing the gospel authorises me and every sinner to live by the righteousness it reveals, why should I not make this use of it? Since the door into the kingdom of God is thus open for sinners, why should I any longer hesitate?*

"But

" But what signifies all this, says the proud devo-
" tee, unless I can find some reason about myself,
" why the Deity should distinguish me as his favourite
" beyond other men? And thus he treats the bare
" truth of the gospel with scorn and contempt."
Note, p. 97.

Aspasio waits for no such reason, therefore this representation does not affect him.

" In vain shall he (any sinner) expect to hear one
" syllable more from God, to encourage him to draw
" nigh to him, than that *he is well pleased in his be-*
" *loved Son;* that JEHOVAH *is well pleased for his*
" *righteousness.*" p. 115.

Hath not God already said, *He that believeth on him shall not be ashamed?* that *he that cometh to him shall in no wise be cast out?* &c. Hath he not given him as bread from heaven, that *whosoever eateth him should live by him?* Has he not given *eternal life to us in him?* even so given to us, that *whosoever* of us *believe not this record* that he hath given of his Son, *makes him a liar?* Are we to set aside these declarations as no encouragement to us to appropriate or to draw nigh to God, lest we should not sufficiently submit ourselves to the divine sovereignty? Or are we not rather to look upon them, as the declarations of sovereign grace; which has found out a way consistent with the highest justice thus to shew favour to the guilty, and for the encouragement of such to believe on him, or draw nigh with confidence through the faith of him?

" The apostle *John* says, *This is his commandment,*
" *that we should believe on the name of his Son; not*
" that we should do any thing to obtain life, but that
" we should live by what he hath done. It is a command-
" ment not requiring any thing of us, but bestowing
" life by the knowledge which it conveys." p. 126.

If I live by what he hath done, I account what he hath done, given me for that purpose. And this is also the use I make of it; and this commandment, so understood,

underſtood, requireth nothing of us, but beſtows life by the knowledge it conveys. So that what our author has here ſaid, expreſſes our whole mind, and may end the diſpute.

" *Paul*, in the deepeſt of all his diſtreſſes, was re-
" lieved by that very faith, which we modern Chri-
" ſtians, in the height of our complaiſance, chuſe only
" to call, of the enfeebled and infantile kind." p. 128.

A miſtake this; *Paul* was relieved by a view of the ſufficiency of grace for himſelf in particular, *My grace is ſufficient for* THEE. He waited for no other righteouſneſs to certify him, that this ſufficient grace belonged to him.

" If we hearken to them, the great point about
" which our faith is principally concerned, is a mat-
" ter which turns out to be true; no book nor man
" can tell how." p. 168.

It turns out to be true in God's faithfulneſs, anſwering to his gracious declarations. Our aſſurance or appropriation is founded and exerciſed upon God's faithfulneſs to anſwer to what he has revealed as the ground of our confidence. That *he has given to us eternal life in his Son;* that *in this man's name is preached to us remiſſion of ſins;* and that *whoſoever believeth on him ſhall not periſh, but have everlaſting life*. So that, in the very nature of the thing, the appropriating language is only the language of truſt and confidence, and will turn out to be truth if God may be depended on, as he moſt ſurely may.

" In the goſpel-offer, we are told, is preſented to
" the poor bankrupt, a bond, or bill indorſed to him,
" to relieve him from his poverty.—It is not his as
" yet." *Ibid.*

It is freely given to him, it is his in right to poſſeſs and enjoy, as any thing we are invited to partake of. It is therefore his to live upon, though not his in preſent enjoyment. It is not preſented to him, but in common with others who periſh, rejecting it as inſufficient;

ficient; yet it is so really presented to him, that he is welcome to live by it, or avail himself of it as his own, without performing one act, or obtaining one qualification to entitle him to it. The difficulty lies in a man's being thoroughly persuaded that this is true; which, when a man really is, he immediately lives by this revealed righteousness without more.

"He at last lays hold of it,—so it becomes his." *Ibid.*

It becomes his by that same grace which has convinced him of its truth, and influenced him thereby to appropriate and enjoy it. It becomes his in possession and enjoyment. Not that God imputes it on account of our appropriation; that only serves the use of peace of conscience by it, and a warrantable enjoyment by the divine word, and to demonstrate we are those to whom it is imputed.

Mr *Marshall*, Mr *Boston*, and Messr. *Erskines*, maintain, that, according to the law, "man is bound to believe whatever God declares, and do whatever he commands; that the duty of believing to be true what God has reported, and receiving what he has commanded us to receive, or take to ourselves, belongs to the law; which fastens the new duty upon us, the moment the gospel reveals the new object." And if this is not true, how will the hearers of the gospel be condemned for despising or neglecting this great salvation? And if this is true, why may not gospel-ministers declare against the rejectors of this grace, what will be matter of their just condemnation? Or, in other words, what proves, that they that perish, perish justly, and of their own will and choice, vindicating the righteous judgment of God.

And is it not to be maintained consistent with this, that the gospel is purely and entirely a revelation of a sufficient righteousness for the most guilty, that where it takes place in the heart, it is by the sovereign grace of him who provided the righteousness it treats of? That in receiving it for true, and living by it, they

are

are fulfilling the command of the new covenant; they are performing of duty; and, at the same time, the subjects of the New-testament promise, in having that obedience, or law written on their heart by the Spirit of the living God, as a Spirit of grace and truth?

"I hope *Satan* does not chain you to your houses, "nor stake you down to your fields on the Lord's "day." p. 267.

This is rather to be considered as a convicting them of their sinful negligence and willing ignorance, than giving any directions what we must do to be saved. In that case we allow the answer is, Either keep the law yourself, or live by what Christ has already done.

"We may now turn our eyes more particularly to "those who are most successful in propagating a per- "verted gospel.—These men do indeed press very "hard upon the conscience to awaken fear: but when "they have driven the serious hearer almost to des- "pair, by an awful description of his miserable con- "dition, and by representing him as utterly unable in "every respect to contribute any thing toward his "own deliverance, they at last condescend, with no "small art and address, to make some comfortable ex- "ceptions from the foregoing awful doctrine.—Now "is described, in a variety of particulars, a conveni- "ent resource, where the pride of the serious hearer "may exercise itself with great hopes of success." p. 279.

The pride of the serious hearer, is the conceit of his being able to do or obtain something to deliver himself, as proceeding from his propensity to live by something he is to do, whereby he becomes self-dependent. The truth is, the gift of the divine righteousness depends on no doing or difference in man. The being quickened by the truth of the gospel to hear the voice of God therein, depends on the sovereign good pleasure of heaven. A man hearing this voice of God, not to the qualified, but to the absolutely guilty

guilty and loſt, is made obedient to the commands and exhortations to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, or to live by his righteouſneſs, without waiting for any other; and the obedience that anſwers as an echo to that divine voice, command, invitation, *&c.* is, and can be no other, than truſting, depending, and aſſuring ourſelves of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, in obedience to the divine declaration; as *Lazarus* came forth in obedience to the voice that quickened him. When we bid ſinners believe on Chriſt, we would be underſtood as exhibiting a quickening truth, as well as a divine command; that is, there is a ſufficient Saviour who may ſafely be depended on. And in obedience to this voice we are not doing that we may live, but we are living by Chriſt alone, in obedience to him who makes the dead to hear his voice. The pride of the ſerious hearer may be as much excited by being told to do that they may know their ſalvation, as to do to be ſaved.

"The preacher finds it neceſſary to warn his hear-
"ers to avoid all thoughts of this doctrine of election
"at preſent." *Ibid.*

That is, when election is objected againſt the divine declarations, encouraging the guilty under that character, and without any evidence of election, to live immediately by Chriſt's righteouſneſs. For the jailor to have objected election againſt *Paul*, when he bid him believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, would have been from the enemy.

"Becauſe (ſays he) there is in this doctrine no vi-
"ſible ground for faith to reſt upon,—no viſible re-
"ſource for the pride of any man." p. 280.

No viſible ground for a ſinner's *confidence* or *truſt in Chriſt alone*, which is not the pride of man, but eſſential to the faith of God's elect.

"Sometimes they take great pains to ſhew us how
"little we do when we put forth an act of faith."
p. 281.

The act we plead for, is to live alone by what Christ has done, whether we call it believing on Christ, receiving, appropriating, trusting, or whatever name we give it; this is what we mean. Our opponents on this head, are those who are for having some good thing to be wrought in us, or done by us, before we are to be allowed to live by what Jesus has done; which is, in fact, a denial of its being wrought for the guilty. When they have been driven out of every subterfuge, they at last plead, that we tell people to believe on Christ; whereas it is the Spirit's work, and they must wait for this working of the Spirit before they are able to believe. We do not pretend to deny, that for a man to believe on the Son of God is the Spirit's work; but at the same time are assured, that when a man is taught of God to believe Christ's righteousness a provision for the guilty, he is not taught to assume any other character as his title to it. Nor is he taught of God to consider himself in any other light than as guilty, and justly condemned. And therefore we farther insist upon it, that a man, without waiting for any thing more than what Christ has already done, is to live by *that*, as sufficient for him, and given to him in the indefinite grant of the gospel. And this he is to do, that is, live by Christ's righteousness in obedience to the divine command and invitation, when he feels nothing good in him, to embolden him thereto; and to depend upon it, that *that* righteousness will not fail him. And thus far we proceed scripturally, according to the answer given to the *Philippian* jailor.

We have also asserted, that a man may ask the question, What shall I do to be saved? and yet be but upon nature's bottom. The direction to that man, is not to wait for to do something, or to get something done in him, but to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. When it has been objected to this, that nature cannot believe on Christ, and therefore such are not to be told so;

ſo; we have anſwered, he that gives the command is able to overcome this difficulty by divine conviction of the truth, writing his laws in our hearts and minds. And while we, thus taught of God, in obedience to the word, are endeavouring to believe or truſt on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, to obtain our certainty, and reſt ſatisfied with this righteouſneſs, the Spirit of grace and truth may further diſſipate every diſtruſtful ſuggeſtion, and make us fully ſo. And here, by believing on Chriſt, we mean ſuch a truſting, confiding on him, as we allow follows a divine paſſive conviction of the truth, that kind of activity which is intimated in the ſcripture-phraſes, *Acts* xvi. 31. *John* vi. 35. and *John* iii. 23.

We cannot believe through our own natural averſeneſs to live by the righteouſneſs of another, or our proneneſs to eſtabliſh our own. But, at the ſame time, he that is taught of God, when he acknowledges he can do nothing, he rejoices that nothing is left for him to do, but on the contrary that he is called to live by what Chriſt has already done. And they who will not diſtinguiſh this life from an endeavour to live by our own righteouſneſs, cannot be farther talked with.

As conviction of the truth of the ſufficiency of Chriſt, and his being freely given to the guilty and loſt, is the only conviction of truth that is free from ſelf-righteouſneſs; ſo to live by this ſufficient righteouſneſs as ſo given, is the only activity that moſt immediately anſwers to the above-mentioned truths.

Palæmon cannot deny, but *coming to Chriſt* has the promiſe of *being in no wiſe caſt out;* but he judges it to be an obedience in conſequence of faith, or the belief of the truth. This, on the other hand, is not denied him. And it may be alſo affirmed, that the promiſe is an encouragement of certainty of ſucceſs to every one that comes to him, and a divine declaration which aſcertains the ſufficient righteouſneſs to be im-

puted to every particular perſon anſwering that character. *Coming to Chriſt* is allowed to be more than a paſſive conviction; it is allowed to be ſomething active in conſequence of ſuch a conviction; and as it cannot be any ſuch activity or coming as contradicts the alone ſufficiency of Chriſt's finiſhed work, what anſwers to the ſcripture-deſcriptions or names given to this activity, more properly than living by that ſufficient righteouſneſs, inſtead of doing or ſeeking to do any thing to add thereto?

And as far as *Aſpaſio*, *Marſhall*, &c. plead for, or encourage, to an activity of this kind, they cannot be accuſed juſtly of ſetting up another righteouſneſs.—This activity terminates in its object, and reſolves itſelf entirely therein. The buſineſs to be accompliſhed by this activity, is only to come under ſuch a certainty of ſalvation by Chriſt alone, as is implied in the words *truſt* and *confidence;* and the nature of it is as oppoſite to ſetting up another righteouſneſs, as the perſuaſion of Chriſt's ſufficiency. *Palæmon* pleads for activity in coming at the certainty of our intereſt in Chriſt's ſufficient work, and we plead for no more. Which therefore removes our plea beyond the reach of his objections.

To plead for appropriation as ſomething to be added to entitle to acceptance, is liable to *Palæmon*'s objections. To plead for it, ſo as to make the ſufficient righteouſneſs depend on that act for its acceptance with God in our behalf, may alſo be accuſed as a doctrine of ſelf-dependence; but to appropriate as an effect of the report believed, as a means of aſcertaining to ourſelves eternal life by that righteouſneſs revealed, and as an animating principle of obedience evidencing our ſpecial intereſt therein, is not at all liable to ſuch objections.

"If faith muſt be called an inſtrument, and if it "be at the ſame time maintained, that juſtification "comes by faith only; then I am at full liberty to "affirm,

" affirm, that he who is poſſeſſed of the inſtrument, " hand, or mouth, is already juſtified, without regard " to his uſing the inſtrument," *&c.* p. 285.

Quite a miſtaken view; becauſe faith, or appropriation of Chriſt, has no exiſtence in itſelf without its object, as material inſtruments have.

" We ſhall ſeldom find them ſpeaking any thing " like the language of the goſpel, without cautioning, " mincing, or clogging it with ſome exceptive, but," *&c. Ibid.*

The apoſtle ſays, To him that worketh not, *but* believeth, *&c.* There is a believing that ſtands oppoſed to working; and if our *but* is the *but* of the apoſtle, and only reſpects our receiving the record, and appropriating the revealed righteouſneſs accordingly, it is free from this exception.

" Though *Theron* is diveſted of all *righteouſneſs of* " *his own*, of every *qualification* and every *recommen-* " *dation*, he muſt yet be well provided with *requiſites*, " even ſuch as may embolden him to make the ap- " propriation." p. 287.

A wide miſtake; *Aſpaſio*'s ſcope and deſign throughout, is to ſhew, that nothing emboldens to appropriation, but the divine grant to ſinners, as ſuch.

" He (*Theron*) is very willing to believe that he is " a gracious perſon." p. 288.

How evident does it appear from the paſſage here quoted, that the *faith* or *truth* recommended was, " *that all was his;*" that is, by way of the divine grant of heaven to the guilty?—Quite different from believing about himſelf that *he is a gracious perſon.*

" And while *Theron* cannot be brought to believe, " *Aſpaſio* beholds his title perfectly clear." p. 289.

Aſpaſio beheld his title or warrant to appropriate from the divine grant made to ſinners; not from the pre-requiſites of *Theron.*

" I muſt frankly own,—that I ſee no more differ- " ence betwixt a careleſs and convicted ſinner, than

" is

" is betwixt a felon ranging his round at large, and " one newly apprehended by the officers of juſtice: " and for my part, I think it would look liker an im- " pertinent ſarcaſm, than any thing elſe, to tell either " of theſe laſt, that he was now in a very hopeful " way." p. 293.

As faith comes by hearing, we hope for another when we can prevail with him only to hear. This does not imply, that there is a foundation of hope in them. We hope when we ſee people concerned about their everlaſting ſtate, that this concern will terminate in liſtening to the remedy that is graciouſly provided.

" As if one could reap any ſpiritual benefit from " ſtudying the divine law, or know how pure, how " extenſive, how ſublimely-perfect it is, before he " knows Chriſt the end thereof for righteouſneſs; as " if ſuch a one could judge of his ſpiritual ſtate im- " partially." p. 295.

Palæmon ſeems to forget, that in page 51. he has intimated, that " it was for want of comparing " themſelves with the divine law, that the Phariſees " made their miſtake." He that meaſures himſelf by others inſtead of this ſublimely-perfect ſtandard, muſt at laſt ſtand ſelf-condemned *. He that meaſures himſelf hereby, will know his ſtate to be deſperate, unleſs relieved by the finiſhed work of Chriſt.

" *Aſpaſio*, then, hath found out a path, by walk- " ing wherein the guilty may confidently hope to ar- " rive at righteouſneſs at laſt." p. 296.

Not ſo, but *Aſpaſio* hath found himſelf guilty by comparing

* If, as the ſcripture affirms, *the thoughts and imaginations of man's heart are evil, and that continually;* if this compound of evils is only in ſome meaſure reſtrained and covered in the brighteſt characters amongſt men; if theſe reſtraints are only from the various workings of *pride*, *fear*, and *ſhame*, in all who are not influenced by the ſaving truth: how wretchedly are they miſtaken, who found their hope on ſelf-excellencies ariſing from ſo poor and ſhameful an original?

comparing himſelf with the divine law;—he hath found the difference ſo great, as to lead him to deſpair of himſelf;—he hath found Chriſt the end of the law for righteouſneſs, and the principle of new evangelical obedience.—He teſtifies of this with confidence, as a ſubject wherewith he is really acquainted, and teſtifies of what he has experienced to be true.

"The doubtſome faith he (*E. E.*) complains of, is "that which admits of a doubt concerning one's own "ſtate. Now, a man may have ſome doubts about "this, who is very firmly perſuaded of the truth of "the goſpel." p. 334.

The doubtſome faith we complain of, is the want of that confidence anſwerable to the gracious declarations of ſalvation in Chriſt to the abſolutely guilty; and not a man's doubting about himſelf, or what he at preſent is. On the contrary, we maintain, that this perſuaſion of a new ſtate in Chriſt, implies our natural ſtate to be quite bad, and paſt recovery; and the particular application we plead for, is flying from a bad ſtate in our natural ſituation, to a good ſtate in the perſon, righteouſneſs, and bleſſings of Chriſt.

As exiſtence, and conſciouſneſs of exiſtence, bear ſuch a relation to each other in the human mind, that the former is only enjoyed by the latter; ſo is juſtification, and the conſciouſneſs of it. If I perceive not my juſtification, it is to me as if I was not juſtified. If I apprehend it is ſo from a falſe foundation, it will prove to me as a dream which vaniſhes when wide awake. If a man, by ſome kind of argument, was to perſuade me that I exiſted a thouſand years ago, though I am not now conſcious of it, it would be the ſame deluſion, as if he was to perſuade me that I am now King *George*, or the King of *Pruſſia*. For a hundred ſuch exiſtences is, in fact, a hundred men, every man's own conſciouſneſs aſcertaining himſelf to himſelf in diſtinction from any other. In like manner, if a man was to uſe arguments, to perſuade

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me that I was juſtified long ago, when I was not conſcious of it, he could propoſe no other end, his labour could no otherwiſe terminate, than in perſuading me that I am now juſtified. And that which is brought to prove, that I am one of thoſe who were juſtified long ago, when I was not conſcious of it, may as well give me a conſciouſneſs of my preſent juſtification, without all that round-about labour. Unleſs it is, that while we are conſidering theſe pre-exiſting juſtifications, we are apt to ſlip ourſelves in for a ſhare, upon a foundation that will not bear a preſent ſcrutiny. The ſcripture, therefore, does not thus metaphyſically ſubtilize, it does not thus ſeparate our juſtification from the conſciouſneſs of it. He that is juſtified, by the finiſhed work of Chriſt, without any conſciouſneſs of a difference between himſelf and others, is juſtified as ungodly; has peace with God by that which juſtifies him; and is juſtified by his faith, that is, not by what he does, but by what he believes: and the additional confirmation, by the fruits of faith, or conſciouſneſs of our not being deceived in our juſtification by faith, is called by the apoſtle *James*, juſtification by works, without bearing any contradiction to the alone righteouſneſs by which we are juſtified. If my juſtification ariſes to me from the difference there is betwixt me and others, I may be ſaid to be juſtified, or enjoy juſtification by that difference. If the ſpring of my hope ariſes to my view from the report making me welcome to the finiſhed work of Chriſt, as the righteouſneſs provided for the guilty to live by, then I am juſtified, or enjoy juſtification by Chriſt's righteouſneſs given to me, in oppoſition to any thing done by me, or performed in me. If my perſonal juſtification, and the conſciouſneſs of it, ſtand ſo nearly related, it is not at all improper that the ground of our acceptance with God, and the ground of our conſciouſneſs of that acceptance, ſhould be of the ſame kind. So that if I am accepted with God by the work

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of Christ alone, given to me, I am to know my acceptance with God just upon the same, and no other foundation. If it were not so, the favourite something might be set up, and the pride of man as fully gratified under the name of marks and evidences, as it is under the name of entitling conditions; and we are as effectually taught to draw near, with a *God I thank thee, I am not as other men.* The sufficient righteousness justifies a man, or gives him a consciousness of his acceptance with God, when he knows it is graciously given to him, so that he is made welcome to draw near to God on that account. He that believes to the peace of his conscience, believes this, and does not rest in an uncertain conjectural hope. Says *Palæmon*, a hope grounded on the sovereignty of God;—say we, not unless that sovereignty has declared a ground of hope for us; otherwise we rest in bare conjecture. But hearing that Jesus has fulfilled all righteousness for the justification of those guilty ones who believe in his name, from a conviction that the doctrine is true, we assure ourselves, in dependence on the divine veracity and faithfulness, that the privileges are our own; or that we shall not be confounded in so trusting to Jesus.

"*Paul* calls upon some whom he himself looked "upon as believers, to examine themselves whether "they were in the faith; and he exhorts others, about "whom he observed the surest tokens of their being "true Christians, to give all diligence to remove e-"very doubt concerning their state." p. 334.

When *Paul* bid the *Corinthians examine themselves*, &c. he plainly intimates their being in the faith a self-evident matter; and that to be in the faith, and to have Christ in them, as the peace of their consciences, and hope of glory, is the same thing; and this was the surest evidence that he had been a minister of Christ unto them. He is not here calling them to remove the doubts concerning their own state, by a discovery

of their faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience. It is alſo very improbable, that the apoſtle ſhould (as *Palæmon* ſays) have the ſureſt tokens of their being Chriſtians, and yet call them to doubt of it.

" I am ſorry to ſee *Aſpaſio* ſo much carried away " with their (*i. e.* the popular preachers) diſſimula- " tion." He points out to *Theron* his danger and remedy in the following manner: " *If you fail in one* " *point, or in any degree, you are guilty of all. If your* " *conformity be not perſevering as well as perfect, you* " *incur the penalty, and are abandoned to the curſe,*" unleſs you find mercy by what Chriſt has already done. No; but " unleſs, renouncing all your *perſonal* per- " formances, you place all your affiance on a *Saviour*'s " atonement and a *Saviour*'s righteouſneſs." p. 334.

They who endeavour to renounce their perſonal performances, as an entitling performance required of them, act inconſiſtently; but they who evidently renounce their own, from a goſpel-diſcovery of the Redeemer's righteouſneſs, and live alone by that, in virtue of the divine declarations, are taught of God, and find mercy by what Chriſt has already done.

" This good conduct of ours, by which we are " ſaid to eſcape the curſe." Note, p. 334.

So we are, according to *Palæmon*, to take care that we have no affiance or confidence in Chriſt's atonement, or righteouſneſs, becauſe that is eſcaping the curſe by ſome good conduct of our own!

" *Were* (ſays Aſpaſio) *that firm and joyful reliance* " *on Chriſt Jeſus, in any degree proportioned to his in-* " *finite merits and inviolable promiſes?* And if (ſays " *Palæmon*) I cannot find acceptance with God, but in " being conſcious of perfect conformity to this new " law, then I am in as great danger as before." p. 335.

Aſpaſio moves this very queſtion, not to obtain a prerequiſite, but to manifeſt the neceſſity of a better righteouſneſs than our reliance, conſidered as a performance or work of ours, that we may rely upon the ſufficient

cient work of Christ, without recurring to any other.

The gospel-declarations are not to be separated from our Saviour, his atonement, or righteousness. Nor can our affiance, knowledge, or enjoyment through that report, be separated from either. Is Christ's righteousness presented to me as a security from the curse of the law? My affiance therein, or knowledge thereof, is Christ, my security, enjoyed by me, and manifested to me. The apostle was not so curious as to distinguish and divide with our author, when he said, *I count all things but loss*, not for the excellency of Christ, in distinction from the knowledge of him, but *for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord;* and this he styles, *not having on his own righteousness*.

"My expectations were greatly raised by the "beautiful and affecting description of the *royal stag* "*chace* in *dial.* 9. till I saw the sinner's relief described as coming to him by means of such conflicts "and struggles, *&c.*" p. 337.

Aspasio does not mean struggling to believe the report, but struggling for that *rest*, which comes at last in a way they thought not of; that is, by the report. The reasons of the soul-struggles described, are ignorance and self-righteousness, seeking other methods of relief than by the declaration of eternal life given in Christ; and it frequently proves, that after many useless struggles in divers ways, the soul thus finds rest.

"They knew their interest in Christ's death, by the "effect that his death had upon them." p. 339.

Christ's death hath its effect upon us when we draw near to God thereby; which is, in fact, when we appropriate it.

"They imagine, that something besides the bare "truth may contribute more or less toward their e-"scape." p. 339.

They are clear of this charge, who escape by what that truth declares.

" The goſpel leads a man to the greateſt reverence " for, and ſubmiſſion to the divine ſovereignty, with- " out having any claim upon God whatſoever, or " finding any reaſon why God ſhould regard him " more than thoſe that periſh." p. 345.

Palæmon maintains, that all who acknowledge the truth of Chriſt's ſufficiency have the promiſe of ſalvation. He does not imagine a dependence on this promiſe oppoſes the moſt abſolute ſubmiſſion to the divine ſovereignty; but is rather a dependence on the promiſes of ſovereign grace. And if we are perſuaded of a grant of this ſufficient righteouſneſs to the guilty, why may not this be admitted as fully conſiſtent with the ſame ſubmiſſion to the divine ſovereignty?

" The divine ſovereignty appearing, that grace " might be ſhewn to the worthleſs; and the divine " juſtice appearing in juſtifying the ungodly," it is very readily acknowledged, leaves a man entirely at the mercy of God for his ſalvation. Here no man's pride is flattered; " no man can find any ground to " preſume, that the Deity regards him more than o- " thers. And the relief a man finds by this diſcovery, " is, that God can be juſt, and juſtify him as he at " preſent ſtands without more, or while he finds no- " thing about himſelf in the way of wiſh, deſire, or " otherwiſe, but what renders him obnoxious to the " divine diſpleaſure." p. 346. The queſtion that remains is, Whether God has not intended a farther relief for ſuch guilty helpleſs ones, even to aſſure them of their particular ſalvation in believing, truſting, and confiding, in this ſufficient righteouſneſs, as given freely to them to be thus depended upon? Whether there is not a word, promiſe, call, or teſtimony, to this purpoſe? and whether Chriſtian obedience is not influenced by an aſſurance thus obtained? At the ſame time we can alſo readily agree, that " no man can " warrantably be aſſured that he is already a Chriſ- " tian,

" tian, a believer in Chriſt, or that he is an object of " the peculiar favour of God, but by being alſo con- " ſcious, on good grounds, that his practice, in obe- " dience to the peculiar precepts of Chriſtianity, is " influenced by that ſame truth, which influenced the " lives of the apoſtles."

Now, if there is ſuch a *word*, *promiſe*, *call*, or *teſtimony*, as above-mentioned, it is very diſtinct from, though not contrary to the declarations concerning the *purpoſe* and *election* of God; and affords a viſible ground for our confident dependence on that righteouſneſs, as ſinners, without finding any reaſon about ourſelves, why God ſhould regard us more than others: whereas the doctrine of election, in the nature of it, is not of itſelf capable of affording us this relief.

It is true, " this *word*, *promiſe*, *call*, or *teſtimony*, " leaves it as much a ſecret what particular perſon " ſhall be ſaved, as the doctrine of the divine *purpoſe*, or *election* does." p. 348. but does not leave the ſinner ſo much without a warrant to appropriate. Notwithſtanding the doctrine of election, *Palæmon* will allow, that *by him*, *all that believe are juſtified*. So alſo it is ſaid, *He that* cometh to him *ſhall in no wiſe be caſt out; He that* believeth on him *ſhall never be confounded*.

In this view of things, we are fully warranted " to " repreſent the Deity, as keeping ſecret his gracious " intentions" to beget this or that particular perſon, by the word of truth; and, at the ſame time, " re- " vealing his gracious intentions" to ſave all thoſe, or any, whoſoever they be, that, without ſeeing any difference at all between themſelves and others, ſhall, upon the bare invitation and divine promiſe to the guilty, live, truſt, or depend on his Son and his righteouſneſs, graciouſly provided as a refuge unto ſuch. And while we " are buſy in prompting our hearers to " live thus by Chriſt alone, as given freely and inde- " finitely to the guilty; we have reaſon to ſhew no

" ſmall

" ſmall concern, leſt *Satan* tempt them" to think, that becauſe God's people are choſen to ſalvation, they are not allowed to feed upon the bread of life, till they know themſelves to be diſtinguiſhed from other ſinners as God's choſen. Hereby ſalvation, to the abſolutely guilty, is denied; and the people are taught to hope for eternal life, only by that which diſtinguiſhes them from the reſt of mankind. This is building wood, hay, and ſtubble, on the precious foundation, Chriſt the Saviour of the loſt.

" They tell us, *that God hath made a grant, or deed* " *of gift of Chriſt, and all his benefits, to ſinners of* " *mankind.* But when we inquire into this again, we " find it turns out to be a gift of benefits to multi- " tudes who are never benefited thereby." p. 350.

And what of all that? Could there be no ſuch thing as manna given to, or rained daily around the camp of *Iſrael*, becauſe ſome deſpiſed it, and longed for the fleſh-pots of *Egypt?* Muſt it follow that there is no ſuch gift, becauſe multitudes neglect and ſlight it? or becauſe, like *Palæmon*, they will not be perſuaded there is ſuch a gift? Shall our unbelief make the gift, the faith, or faithfulneſs of God, of none effect? It remaineth nevertheleſs a truth, that whoſoever believeth on him, or receiveth the gift, ſhall not periſh, but have eternal life. And why may not they miſs of the benefit of this gift who thus reject it, as the word preached never profited, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it?

" It might, with equal propriety, be ſaid, that " there is a grant of life made in the law, and that " the divine willingneſs to bleſs men is therein ex- " preſſed; Keep the commandments, and thou ſhalt " live." p. 351.

It might ſo; the difference lies here. The grant of life in the law, requires conditions to be previouſly performed, before we may preſume to account the bleſſing ours. The goſpel beſtows life in Chriſt without

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out any condition, or as a free gift, to be immediately enjoyed.

In page 352. ſeveral inſtances of the faith of thoſe who were healed by Chriſt, are reduced to evidence, that they only believed Chriſt's ability to cure them. To this I anſwer, that in thoſe inſtances they waited for a proper ground, or declaration to proceed upon, in believing that he would; and for that purpoſe they made application to him. And where they had ground for concluding the event, they were as certain of *that*, as of his ability. And faith in thoſe caſes includes *that* certainty. 1 *Cor.* xiii. 2. *If I had all faith, ſo that I could remove mountains*, comp. with *Matth.* xvii. 20. *When he ſaw he had faith to be healed*, Acts xiv. 9. and in *Luke* v. 19, 29. they neither doubted his ability, or willingneſs. In our caſe, the grant of a Saviour to the guilty is declared, as well as the ſufficiency of his righteouſneſs; hence we make God a liar, if we do not proceed on the truth of both.

"The leper, like the two blind men, was fully "perſuaded that Chriſt was able to relieve him. Yet, "as he had no claim upon him, he referred his re- "queſt entirely to his ſovereign pleaſure. In the full "aſſurance of faith he was at Chriſt's mercy, who "was nowiſe obliged to apply his healing power to "him." p. 352.

But this is no argument againſt that appropriation, which proceeds entirely upon the gracious declaration, and grant of that ſovereign good pleaſure. If the ſovereign good pleaſure has declared the guilty as ſuch, ſo welcome to what is already done, that *whoſoever believeth on him ſhall have eternal life;* he hath no other application to make, or to wait for. We may be without any claim upon God to do for us any thing that he has not already done, or to give us any right unto what is already done; but as far as he is pleaſed to declare himſelf, it is our buſineſs aſſuredly to believe, truſt in him, or hope in his mercy. And that

appropriation

appropriation which proceeds wholly upon his gracious declaration, is consistent with the utmost submission to sovereign grace.

" Sovereign grace interposed, providing a righte-
" ousness for the guilty world." p. 353.

Palæmon should say, to ascertain his meaning, " providing a righteousness for some of the guilty " world."

" When once the gift of righteousness is made
" known to a man." p. 353.

Can the gift properly be said to be made known to a man, unless he knows to whom it is given? A gift to nobody, is no gift. A gift to the elect, or to the qualified, is not a gift to the guilty world, but to them that are chosen out of it, and distinguished from it.

" He that believeth on the Son of God, hath the
" record in himself,—the record that God gave of
" his Son." *Ibid.*

Palæmon slips over the record here treated of, *viz. That God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* This the apostle points unto, as what is to be particularly regarded, *And this is the record*, &c. Nor should the testimony, that he is well pleased in him, be understood in any sense exclusive of it.

" In like manner, all his children in the faith be-
" lieve the divine word for righteousness, without
" perceiving any shadow or symptom of it about
" themselves, without feeling or being conscious of
" any thing about themselves, to concur with the
" divine word, to make out their righteousness." *Ibid.*

This description suits *Aspasio* much better than *Palæmon*, who waits for a discovery of his faith, love, and self-denied obedience.

" If we look into the scripture, must we not say,
" that all the good works which shall be recompensed
" at the resurrection of the just, are produced by the
" influence

" influence of the divine Spirit dwelling in the hearts " of thoſe who believe? Yet ſuch is the connection " betwixt every good work and its reward, that, ac- " cording to the ſcripture, the juſtice of God, not " to ſay his grace, is concerned to make it good: " *Heb.* vi. 10. *God is not unrighteous to forget your* " *work and labour of love.—Whoſoever ſhall give you a* " *cup of water to drink in my name,—verily I ſay un-* " *to you, he ſhall not loſe his reward.* Juſtice, as well " as grace, will appear in the laſt judgment; then due " regard will be had to every man's works. But in " the juſtification of ſinners, God has no reſpect to " any man, as better than another. He conſiders men, " when he commends his love to them, as ungodly, " and without ſtrength, that is, without any will to " be better. And all who find mercy, are brought " to view themſelves in that ſame point of light, " wherein God beheld men when he gave his Son to " die for them. They do not find themſelves pre- " pared, or made fitter than others for mercy, by " any work of the divine Spirit upon their minds; " but they find their firſt taſte of comfort by hearing " of him, *who through the eternal Spirit offered him-* " *ſelf without ſpot to God.*" p. 257.

Then they find their firſt taſte of comfort independent of any previous diſcovery or diſcernment of their faith, love, or ſelf-denied obedience. And their firſt taſte of comfort is, not that there is a ſufficient righteouſneſs provided for the elect, or the qualified, but that there is a ſufficient righteouſneſs provided for the guilty to live by, without waiting for any farther diſcovery.

" The popular doctrine ſuppoſes, that unbelievers " may be ſeriouſly engaged in praying for the Holy " Spirit to help them to faith, and exhorts them ac- " cordingly; which is as abſurd as to ſuppoſe, that a " man may be deſirous of being influenced by the Spi- " rit of a truth, which, at preſent, he neither be-

" lieves nor loves. For I reckon it must be granted, that " no man loves the gospel before he believes it." p. 360.

If we only understood by the gospel that we were welcome to do something, or to wait and pray for something to denominate us Christ's people, then we might be complaining for want of this power, praying for it, and perhaps falsely comforted with the supposed will for the deed; and all the while there is no willingness to live entirely by what Christ has done. But this is not the case: when *Aspasio* considered appropriation as essential to faith, and pressed it accordingly, he understood by appropriation, a living entirely by Christ's righteousness alone, without waiting for any other.

" When our systems describe faith to us, as a saving " grace bestowed on us, by which we make use of " Christ for salvation; are we not led to think of some " grace necessary to our salvation, beside what ap- " peared when Christ, by the grace of God, tasted " death for the sins of men?" p. 361.

But in as much as *Aspasio*'s whole plea is to live immediately by that grace alone, without waiting for any other; he stands clear of this mistake.

" They seem to forget, that Christ is in heaven, " and we on the earth;—that the only way wherein " we can receive benefit from Christ, is by the report " concerning him conveyed to our ears." p. 363.

If the report, in this particular case, invites and authorises us to live by him, and the righteousness which he performed, who is gone to heaven; we may, notwithstanding he is gone to heaven, receive the report for true, and also lay hold of, or live by the righteousness it thus reveals and conveys to us.

" When he comes to know that he may be justified, " he finds immediately a covert from the storm." p. 364.

But according to *Palæmon*, he does not find this to be a covert *for him*, till he discovers distinguishing qualifications;

qualifications; whereas *Aſpaſio* finds a covert for the guilty ſinner, without any ſuch diſtinction.

"If now we underſtand by the *ſtorm*, the wrath "that is to come, the believer, knowing that Chriſt "hath done enough to deliver from it, loves him, "takes hold of him, or flies to him."

How?

"In obeying his commands, and frequenting every "mean of correſpondence with him." *Ibid.*

He that loves him, takes hold of him, or flies to him, obeys his commands; and is inclined to frequent every means of correſpondence with him; but to give us this as the meaning and import of thoſe ſcriptural phraſes and repreſentations, more becomes Mr *Locke*, or Archbiſhop *Tillotſon*, than the evangelical *Palæmon*. He may be aſſured, if he abides by this doctrine, the offence of the croſs will ſoon ceaſe. The primitive Chriſtians were taught to obey, becauſe *Jeſus had delivered them from the wrath to come*, 1 Theſſ. i. 10. They fled to him as the righteouſneſs provided for the guilty and deſtitute; and by the enjoyment of him, under this character, they were diſpoſed to all other obedience.

"Accordingly we find *Barnabas* exhorted thoſe at "*Antioch*, in whom he ſaw the grace of God, that "with purpoſe of heart they would *cleave unto the* "*Lord*. The conſequence of which was, they aſſem- "bled together in the appointed church-order, and "denied themſelves in ſending relief to their brethren "in *Judea*." p. 365.

Did they not aſſemble as members of Chriſt, and partakers of his righteouſneſs? Did they not cleave to him as the Lord their righteouſneſs? Or did they only fall into the appointed church-order, in order to eſcape the wrath to come? If ſo, what is now become of the ſufficient righteouſneſs? or, in ſhort, of all the apoſtolic exhortations, which conſtantly pro-

ceed upon the certainty of salvation by Christ, as the principle of all the obedience they call for.

" See what effect the knowledge of Christ had on " *Paul*, and what was his steady purpose: *Yea doubt-* " *less, and I count all things but loss, for the excellency* " *of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*" Ibid.

Paul says, *My Lord*, the thing we plead for, and counts himself *apprehended of Christ Jesus*. So that it is plain, he *ran not as uncertainly, he fought not as one that beateth the air*. And as his assurance did not allow him, or lead him to trifle, or slacken his diligence in pressing forward to the desired end; so, on the other hand, his pressing forward was far from being the result of his uncertainty; far from being animated with a view to know by his performances, whether the divine sovereignty had interposed in his behalf.

Palæmon does not approve of *Aspasio* saying, " You " must endeavour, diligently endeavour, to believe." *Ibid.* But we may plead, in his excuse, that *Aspasio* is not here pressing to receive a report as true without evidence, but to appropriate and live by the revealed righteousness; to obtain and maintain thereby that certainty of acceptance with God, which was necessary to animate and incline to all evangelical obedience, and is included in every apostolic exportation. *Wherefore as ye have always obeyed—As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him.—Work out your own salvation—Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life*, &c. And thus understood, we may allow, with *Palæmon*, that " by such arguments God " worketh in them that believe, both to will and to " do, not any thing in order to justification, but all " those things wherein their salvation is evidenced." p. 367.

" If a friend of mine should see me chearful, on " hearing something new, and I should tell him, I was " comforted by an act of faith; would he not say I " trifled with him, and readily ask what good news I

" had

" had heard, that he might partake in my ſatisfaction ?" p. 369.

But this repreſentation does not reach thoſe who plead for an immediate and conſtant living upon the complete and perfect righteouſneſs of Jeſus Chriſt. They are comforted by *his* acts, and their own has no other concern in it,

" Faith, with its effects, is in ſcripture often ſigni-
" fied by one expreſſion, and accordingly connected
" with ſalvation, as when it is ſaid, *Whoſoever ſhall*
" *call on the name of the Lord ſhall be ſaved.* Now,
" though we cannot ſay that a believer is ſaved on
" account of his prayers ; yet we may ſay, that he is
" ſaved on account of what he believes, and by which
" he is encouraged to pray. It is eaſy to ſee love and
" hope expreſſed in all the prayers of faith recorded
" in the ſcripture ; yet it would be abſurd to infer
" from thence, that prayer, love, and faith, are re-
" quiſites in order to juſtification : for, if we agree
" with the apoſtles, we muſt ſtill maintain, that juſ-
" tification comes by faith, and not by works, not
" by any thing we do in obedience to any law what-
" ſoever." p. 370.

And at the ſame time it muſt be acknowledged, that faith is duty and obedience to the divine law, and in this ſenſe a work : for, as our author has obſerved, p. 354. " Will not that law which Chriſt came to
" fulfil, the law which requires love to God with all
" the heart, condemn all who by their unbelief make
" God a liar ? Does not the Spirit of God convince
" all whom he brings to the knowledge of the truth,
" of ſin, becauſe they believe not on Chriſt ? In
" fine, is there any thing contrary to the goſpel
" of the glory of the bleſſed God, not condemned
" by the divine law ?" How can theſe be reconciled, unleſs we admit that faith is ſo far a work, duty, or obedience, as has been above mentioned. Yet, as *Palæmon* maintains, we are juſtified only

only by *what we believe*. We are juſtified by faith as we are pleaſed with a ſight, that is, with *what we ſee*. And God juſtifies us by faith when he gives us this ſight or faith, whereby we are thus juſtified. And thus to be juſtified by Chriſt's blood, and to be juſtified by faith, is the ſame thing.

If *Palæmon* will abide by what he ſays, p. 371. that "the ſcriptures point forth the freedom of divine "grace to the ſetting aſide all human diſtinctions, in "ſuch language as this, *If* any *man will come after "me;—Let him that heareth ſay come; and whoſoever "will, let him take of the water of life freely*," p. 371. we are then agreed, this is the foundation of all we plead for, that ſinners, as ſuch, are made welcome to take of the water of life freely.

"If the ſcriptures deſcribe believers as pilgrims, "and ſtrangers on earth, as running the Chriſtian "race, denying themſelves for the ſake of the hea-"venly inheritance, and accordingly *flying for refuge*, "*to lay hold upon the hope ſet before them;* our "preachers, ever mindful of their acts of faith, are "ready to exhort us to put forth the acts of *flying to "Chriſt, and laying hold on him.*" p. 372.

The paſſage alluded to is *Heb.* vi. 18, 19. *That by two immutable things, in which it was impoſſible for God to lie, we might have a ſtrong conſolation, who* have fled *for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope ſet before us. Which* hope *we have as an anchor of the ſoul, both ſure and ſtedfaſt*, &c. WHO HAVE FLED is an act paſſed, and bears a manifeſt reference to flying from the revenger of blood to the cities of refuge, *Numb.* xxxv. 27. to which city the man-ſlayer being fled, was, while there, ſecure; not in his act, but in the privilege of the city wherein he now dwelt; and waited unto the death of the high prieſt, as the hope ſet before him. The hope ſet before us, the apoſtle tells us we yet ſee not, *but with patience wait for it*, Rom. viii. 25. But how can we with patience wait for it, if it is not at preſent the

anchor

anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast? Or, as the apostle says in another place, *I so run, not as uncertainly.* Yet as his security lay in that righteousness of Christ alone, he kept *his body* (all his temporal concerns) *under subjection* thereto, even as the man-slayer abode in the city of refuge, knowing there was no safety for him elsewhere. When a man performs his acts of obedience, that he may thereby gain himself a conscious title, possession, or enjoyment, of the favour of God, it is but of little moment whether he styles it the favour of God by Christ, or by any other name. His way to come at it is still the same, by his own obedience. Nor can this be flying for refuge to Christ, but rather chusing my own performances as my security, and betaking myself to them.

"If *Barnabas* exhorts those in whom he saw the "grace of God, with purpose of heart to *cleave unto* "*the Lord*, after the example of the believers who "were said to be added unto the Lord, when they "were added to the society of the disciples, keeping his commands, then we are told that justifying "faith is a *cleaving to Christ.*" Ibid.

It will answer our purpose, and convey our whole meaning, to say, The faith which justifies cleaves to Christ; and in exhorting to cleave to Christ, we exhort to continue in the faith. The phrase, *Believers were the more added to the Lord*, is, very evidently, neither more nor less, than that many more were begotten to the faith. As to what relation these phrases may also bear to fellowship in the gospel, see the answer to p. 365. in p. 379.

"But *Aspasio* tells us, in this page, that it is the "office of faith, *to take and use the inestimable gift.* If "in this, or any other part of the *New Testament*, "more be meant by *receiving Christ*, than knowing "him, or believing on him, then I am ready to shew, "that more than *faith* is meant, namely, faith with "its fruits and effects." p. 373.

By

By *receiving Christ* more may be meant than *knowing him*, but not more than *believing on him*. We may be said to *know* a thing when its evidence forces itself upon the mind; but to *believe on Christ*, is, in the scripture-sense, the subject of exhortation. If *Palæmon* will confine himself to mean by faith, no more than a passive conviction of truth, it shall be allowed him, that by *believing on Christ* more than he means by faith is intended. The same may be said of the phrases *laying hold*, *leaning*, &c. more is allowed to be meant by these expressions than *Palæmon* means by faith. At the same time it may be affirmed, that these expressions of activity "do not contribute their quota" to our justification, since we are justified by the righteousness received, trusted, or leaned upon, and not by our act. We are justified by *what we receive*, even as *Palæmon* will allow we are justified by *what we believe*.

"The faith of the gospel is indeed the basis of "trust." p. 374.

If so, we are agreed again, for this *trust* we call *believing on Christ*. If the faith of the gospel is *the basis of trust*, it is of appropriation; for how can I trust in that wherein I am not allowed to take any share? If we are not allowed to trust in the Redeemer's righteousness when absolutely guilty, the faith of the gospel is not the basis of trust. In *Palæmon*'s view, the gospel only shews us the possibility of the salvation of the elect, and cannot therefore be the basis of trust to a sinner, but the discovery of his obedience, as giving him hopes that he is one of the elect, is, in fact, the matter wherein his *trust* is founded.

"If one approaching to a frozen lake or river, over "which he has occasion to pass, tells me, that he has "been assured, by good information, that the ice was "sufficiently strong to support him; and yet, after all, "proves timorous, and averse to make the trial, *by* "*venturing his person freely upon it;* I plainly perceive "he

" he has no faith in the report he heard; becauſe he " does not *truſt in it;* or, which is the ſame thing, " he cannot truſt, rely, confide in, or venture him- " ſelf upon the ice." *Ibid.*

There cannot be a more apt illuſtration of what we plead for. And he that ventures his eternal concerns on the all-ſufficient righteouſneſs of Chriſt, with the ſame confidence that he that believes the ice will bear him ventures his body upon that, will not be averſe to run the riſk of his intereſt and reputation alſo for the ſake of it. We can therefore have no objection to *Palæmon*, when he ſays,

" If one tells me, that he believes the goſpel, and " yet proves averſe to riſk his intereſt or reputation " in the world for the ſake of it; I immediately per- " ceive, that whatever he ſpeaks with his mouth, he " does not in his heart believe the goſpel, becauſe he " puts no truſt in it." p. 375.

" Perhaps it will now be inquired, Are no rules to be " obſerved, no means to be uſed, no works to be ex- " erted by the human mind or body, in order to juſ- " tification? The anſwer is ready: Yes, very many. " And they may be thus ſhortly ſummed up: Be per- " fect, keep the commandments, and thou ſhalt live. " The obligation of the law is eternal, and cannot be " looſed.—But, perhaps, another ſtate of the queſtion " will be demanded, and that faith ſhould be more " directly reſpected therein: Well then, let it ſtand " thus: Ought not a man to be at pains to attain the " perſuaſion, that all the pains he takes are good for " nothing, except to enhance his guilt? Here, me- " thinks, we are landed at downright abſurdity. For " who will labour in hopes of being convinced, that " all his labour is to no purpoſe, unleſs to his hurt?" p. 387. 388.

This we may allow to be very well ſtated, with reſpect to the perſons whom it concerns. But the queſtion between our author and *Aſpaſio*, really ſtands thus:

thus: Are no rules to be observed, no means to be used, no acts to be exerted by the human mind or body, to arrive at the certainty of our own particular justification? *Palæmon* says, Yes, a great many; as many as will serve to demonstrate that we are elected. *Aspasio* says, only thankfully to receive or accept the blessings as freely given: and all the direction given by *Aspasio*, respects this question, and not the sufficiency of the finished work of Christ to justify the most guilty.

"The design of the passage (*Rom.* x. 19, 20, 21.) "is plainly to shew, that faith comes not by any human endeavours, or the use of any means, even "under the greatest advantages that men can enjoy, "but of that same sovereign good pleasure which "provided the grand thing believed." p. 390.

Here is then, notwithstanding all *Palæmon*'s exactness, a *something more* than the finished work of Christ, a something called faith, which he tells us comes "of "that same sovereign good pleasure which provided "the grand thing believed." *Palæmon* will reply, he means no more than believing that which is provided is sufficient; nor do we mean any more by appropriation, than *receiving* that which is sufficient, as believing it to be freely given to us for that purpose.

"I would here subjoin, by way of postscript to "this, some reflections on the *assurance* or *appropria*"*tion* said to be essential to saving faith.

"While various terms and distinctions are coined "by popular preachers on this subject, great neglect "is shewn to a very plain and obvious distinction, "which *Paul* makes betwixt the assurance of faith, "and the assurance of hope." p. 393.

Upon a review of the scriptures to see what foundation there was for this remark, I gathered the following:

1. In regard to faith. *Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ,* Rom.

Rom. v. i. *All joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. and not by what *Palæmon* ſtyles aſſurance of hope gathered from a diſcovery of our faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience.

The language of faith is not barely concerning others, the elect, *&c. But* WE *believe, that, through the grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt,* WE *ſhall be ſaved*, Acts xv. 11.

Faith is deſcribed, *Heb.* xi. 25, 26. to be ſo far the aſſurance of eternal life by Chriſt, as to be on that very account, *the victory that overcomes the world.*

They that died in faith, *not having received the promiſes, but having ſeen them afar off, and were perſuaded of and embraced them, and* (therefore) *confeſſed they were ſtrangers and pilgrims on the earth*, Heb. xi. 23. did they not appropriate theſe promiſes? or, did they only conſider them as belonging to the elect, and themſelves uncertain whether they were of the number, till they could diſcover it by the diſcovery of their faith, love, and ſelf-denied obedience?

The aſſurance of faith proceeds upon *having boldneſs to enter into the holieſt by the blood of Jeſus,—by a way conſecrated for us,—and having a high prieſt over the houſe of God*, Heb. x. 19, 22. And can all this be in a fixed uncertainty, or without appropriation? Can I draw near, as having a way conſecrated, or as having a high prieſt over the houſe of God; and, at the ſame time, don't know whether I have or no?

If we are condemned for aſking doubtingly, *James* i. 6, 7. and for little faith in providence, *Matth.* vi. 30. does not the oppoſite character imply a certainty of divine favour and regard by ſovereign grace, independent of a diſcovery of our previous obedience?

Rom. xiv. 23. *Whatſoever is not of faith*, (*i. e.* whatſoever action is not of confidence of acceptance with God,) *is ſin.* Does not this ſcripture make confidence eſſential to faith?

Rom. iv. 5. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly*, &c. Is not this inconsistent with waiting to be godly, before I dare put my trust in him?

We cannot *call on him in whom we have not believed*, Rom. x. 14. that is, we cannot *call in faith, nothing doubting*, as above, *Jam.* i. 6.

It is the divine commandment to *believe in his name*, 1 *John* iii. 23. and it is the strength of faith *against hope*, of what we see or feel, *to believe in hope* of what God has freely given and promised.

Eph. iii. 12. *In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the* FAITH *of him.* Can this be where there is no appropriation?

Gal. v. 5. *We, thro' the Spirit, wait for the hope of righteousness by* FAITH. Can this be said in uncertainty? or in a conditional certainty depending on our performance?

Can the dead live by *believing on him*, according to *John* xi. 25. if they are to wait till they feel life first?

2. In regard to hope, we are told, that not our performances, but God's promise and oath are the *strong consolation* of them *who have fled for refuge to lay hold of the* HOPE *set before them; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both* SURE *and* STEDFAST, *and which entereth into that within the vail.* Heb. vi. 18, 19.

We are told to *hold fast the beginning of our confidence---the confidence and rejoicing of the hope, firm unto the end.* Heb. iii. 6.

As we *have not seen and yet have believed*, so we are said to *hope for that we see not*, and *patiently wait for it*, Rom. viii. 25. *We are saved through faith*, Eph. ii. 8. *We are saved by hope*, Rom. viii. 23. *We are said to purify ourselves by this hope*, 1 John iii. 3. *To have our hearts purified by faith*, Acts xv. 9. *To purify our souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit, unto the unfeigned love of the brethren*, 1 Pet. i. 22. *We are said to be all the children of God by faith in Jesus Christ*,

Christ, Gal. iii. 29. to be *begotten again to a lively hope*, not through a discovery of our obedience, *but by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. And *the God of hope* fills us with *all joy and peace in believing*, Rom. xv. 13. *And being justified by faith, we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God*, Rom. v. 2.

When we are exhorted, 1 Pet. iii. 15. to *be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh us a reason of the hope that is in us*, I apprehend our faith, or that truth we believe, is that reason, and not our own righteousness or qualifications. Upon this review of these scriptures, it appears to me, that *Palæmon*'s refinement upon the scripture-phrases, to the excluding appropriation or certainty of salvation from faith, and ascribing it wholly to a discovery of our inherent qualifications, under the name of assurance of hope, is not so scripturally founded as he has imagined.

"The assurance of hope, is enjoyed only by those "who give all diligence to obtain it." p. 393.

That they are exhorted to shew *the same diligence to the full assurance of hope unto the end*, is true. We are also to *hold fast the beginning of our* confidence *stedfast unto the end.*

"The first of these (the assurance of faith) was "called for in a man's first profession of the faith, "upon his first hearing the gospel, in order to his be-"ing acknowledged for a Christian." *Ibid.*

Hope is also called the *hope of our calling by the gospel*, Eph. i. 18. not the hope of our obedience, or hope arising from our qualifications. And upon a man's first hearing the gospel, when he was first begotten again by the word of truth, he is said to be *begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Christ from the dead*, 1 Pet. i. 3. Christ is said to *dwell in our hearts by* FAITH, Eph. iii. 17. and *Col.* i. 27. as our HOPE *of glory*. And if he is not thus in us, we are said to be not young professors, or young Christians, but *reprobates*.

"The

" The assurance of faith is likewise necessary to the " drawing near to God in his worship." p. 394.

We are likewise said to *draw near to God by the better hope*, Heb. vii. 19. *which hope we have as an anchor of the soul both* SURE *and* STEDFAST.

" The assurance of hope again, is an enjoyment " proposed to them who believed." *Ibid.*

A stedfast continuance, full assurance, and increase in the faith is proposed to them also.

" The assurance of hope, then, holds pace, first and " last, with the work and labour of love." *Ibid.*

The apostolic *hope* held pace, first and last, with the apostolic faith; and love or charity followed both. The apostles do not teach the order to be *faith*, *love*, and *hope*, because I love; but *faith*, in the revealed righteousness, is the spring of *hope;* and *love* flowing from both. *Now abideth faith*, *hope*, *and charity; these three* as the root, and not the fruit of our obedience.

" There was no Christian, however eminent, in " the days of the apostles, but needed the exhortation, " to give all diligence for maintaining and confirming " the assurance of hope." *Ibid.*

Nor was any Christian so far advanced, but he might be exhorted to be *strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus*, *and continue in the faith grounded and settled.*

" They often called on men to examine them- " selves." *Ibid.*

They declared remission of sin immediately in Christ's name, as the truth whereby we pass *from death to life.* They did not teach people to find remission of sin by the way of their inherent dispositions, or works; but when the apostle *Paul* was called upon for a proof of Christ speaking in him, he bid the *Corinthians examine themselves* for that proof; for if they had not received Christ, they were *reprobates;* and if they had, they were his *epistle of commendation*, agreeable to what he had said, chap. iii.—xiii. 5.

" No

"No man, then, can be charged with the sin of "disbelieving the gospel, for doubting, if he be a "good Christian." *Ibid.*

But he may, for doubting whether Christ is given to him in the divine declarations to sinners; or, whether he may trust to those declarations; or, for doubting whether he may venture his eternal concerns upon Jesus Christ alone, without, and before any discovery of his excellency above other men.

"Yea, we find the apostles ready to quash the con- "fidence of those who were ready to conclude their "state was changed, by such awful sentences as this: "*He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his command-* "*ments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.*" p. 395.

They who professed the faith and hope of Christians, and were evidently not influenced by the Christian love, to observe the commandments of him in whom they professed to believe, were undoubtedly the subjects of this censure; which may well be admitted without any contradiction to the *hope* of a guilty sinner *by Christ alone*.

"The apostles frequently declare their assurance of "faith and of hope in the same passage. While they "express their faith in Christ, they are at the same "time confident of their interest in him." *Ibid.*

This proves, that either the apostles Christian *hope*, stood in a nearer connection with their *faith*, and sprung more immediately from their doctrine, than *Palæmon* will admit of; or else that he is more accurate than they in describing it.

"This joint assurance they sometimes express in "fellowship with all that follow their footsteps, and "often, in language plainly, distinguishing the apostles "themselves from other professors of the faith." *Ibid.*

The 1 *John* v. 11. is not of this sort: *This is the record*, which *he that believeth, hath in himself; he that believeth it not, maketh God a liar, because he believeth not the record which he gave of his Son.* And THIS IS

THE

THE RECORD that God hath given, not to us apoſtles, excluſive of others; not to us who can ſay, God, I thank thee, I am not as other men; but to us, guilty, ſinners, loſt, &c.; to us, as numbered with them, who, in not believing it, make God a liar. *God hath given to us eternal life, and this life is in his Son.* So given him, that *he that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son of God, hath not life;* it being only to be received, poſſeſſed, or enjoyed in receiving, poſſeſſing, and enjoying of him.

" The ſame Spirit, acting as the Comforter, is given " only to thoſe who are already the friends of Chriſt. " —To this purpoſe, *Paul* ſays, *Gal.* iv. 6. *And becauſe* " *ye are ſons, God hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son* " *into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father.*" p. 397.

That is, and becauſe ye, while enemies, have received, through the goſpel, *the adoption of children by Jeſus Chriſt*, Eph. i. 5. Becauſe, alſo, according to the fulneſs of time, ye are ſons; the church being come out of her nonage. As a proof of this, it is evident, God hath not given you *the ſpirit of bondage again to fear*, but *he hath ſent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts*, whereby ye obtain ſuch a diſcovery of ſalvation to the guilty, as enables you to cry, *Abba, Father.*

" The Holy Spirit then acts a twofold part, as he " breathes in the goſpel. He reconciles enemies, and " he comforts friends. *Ibid.*

He reconciles and comforts enemies in the ſame inſtant, and by the ſame truth; ſo the diſtinction is not properly founded. Beſides, the conſolation we have by Chriſt to the end, is of the ſame nature with the beginning; the grace that is manifeſt in Chriſt Jeſus to the guilty. Not but that we have alſo the additional conſolation of thoſe ſayings which relate to our witneſſing and ſuffering for the truth.

" What then ſhall we ſay of thoſe pretenders to " the apoſtolic conſolation, whoſe very profeſſion of " Chriſtianity, inſtead of being any loſs to them,

" ſpreads

" ſpreads their reputation for piety, and procures " them eſteem and reverence from the world ?" p. 398.

We will ſay, their conſolation is not apoſtolic, that the offence of the croſs has ceaſed with them, or that they are of the world. But it is very plain, *Aſpaſio*'s appropriation, or that truſt where in he is comforted, has not had this effect; however he may have been honoured on other accounts.

" In latter times, not a few have, from the hand " of church-authority, ſupported by ſecular power, " endured the ſame ſufferings which the apoſtles met " with from the *Jews* and *Romans*, and accordingly " enjoyed the ſame conſolation. It was very natural " for ſuch of them as were writers, to commend the " faith which thus wrought by love." *Ibid.*

They ſuffered as maintaining the certainty of ſalvation by Chriſt alone; and did not ground their certainty upon their ſufferings; although they were far from being diſcouraged thereby, but endured them with additional conſolation. Their aſſurance gave the offence, and cauſed their ſufferings.

" Shall we ſay, that theſe friends of Chriſt would " have approved of that aſſurance of an intereſt in " him, which men now pretend to acquire by ſome " *heart-work*, in a full conſiſtency with their worldly " eaſe and reputation ?" p. 399.

Nor does *Aſpaſio* plead for ſuch an aſſurance; what he pleads for is founded only upon the divine declarations to guilty ſinners; and is far from having the approbation of the devout and honourable of the world, however they may profeſs to eſteem his writings on account of the elegancy of the ſtyle, or ſome particulars foreign to his main intention in them.

" The modern aſſurance—proceeds on the principle, " that the ſimple truth believed, affords no joy nor " comfort." p. 402.

This cannot be our caſe who plead for the joy and

comfort of the ſufficient righteouſneſs, as given freely to the guilty in thoſe evangelical declarations. See remark on p. 85. in p. 354.

" Will the news of a plentiful importation of corn, " in the time of famine, give joy to many ready to " periſh, and revive even the pooreſt with the hope " that they may be fed ?" *Ibid.*

Will the joy and comfort of this news be ſet aſide, by underſtanding that the corn is freely given for us to live upon without money or price ? Will not this rather enhance the joy ? Does not the pooreſt receive comfort from ſuch tidings, becauſe they expect either to be able to buy ſome, or to have ſome given them ? See remark on p. 429.

" Yet no man knows certainly, but his preſent day " may be his laſt."

But the joy created by the news above mentioned, proceeds on a contrary ſuppoſition, *viz.* That he ſhall live and be ſuſtained by it. Beſides, the bread of life concerns a day that will never have an end, therefore this uncertainty is foreign to the purpoſe.

" And however diffident the convert" (that is, the convert of *Aſpaſio*'s ſtamp) " be, he is ſtill ſuppoſed " to be poſſeſſed of ſome degree of aſſurance, provi- " ded he blame himſelf for the want of it." p. 403.

He is ſuppoſed to live by Chriſt alone, as his ſufficient righteouſneſs, who condemns every word, work, or thought, to the contrary, or who fights this fight of faith againſt all oppoſitions and trials, inward or outward. But though we may make ſuch an allowance, this is not our point. The queſtion is not ſo much about whether I believe, let that make itſelf evident. The proper queſtion to be always conſidered and reſted in, is this : Does God give to guilty me eternal life in his Son ? Is this the ſpring of my hope, and the ſource of my love and obedience ? Do I live, not by my notion that I am a believer, but do I live by this ?

" They

"They (the devils) believe, they hate, and yet they "tremble at that truth which Christ's people believe, "love, and find salvation in. With them are ranked "all those of mankind, who know as much of the truth "as inclines them to hate and pervert it." p. 405.

Yet it cannot be said of the devils, they have the same confidence. It cannot be said of the devils, that they receive or appropriate the divine righteousness as freely given to them, or that they see any foundation for it.

"In this view the same truth is the savour of life "unto life unto some, and of death unto death unto "others. In this view, the same truth is the object "of contempt and chagrin to some, and of love and "joy to others. *Ibid.*

True it is so, but not by both believing it alike for themselves.

LETTER VI.

"We are now then to consider faith as a principle "of life and action." p. 406.

Palæmon is here obliged to admit of a different consideration of faith. If he considered it in justification as a principle of life and action, he would have been involved in the mistakes he has been opposing. If on the other hand he denied faith to be a principle of life and action, he would overthrow the principle of the Christian obedience he pleads for. Now, since he is thus obliged to take up this distinction for himself, why should he not allow it to *Aspasio?* Why should he not allow that appropriation, although it is an act, or work exerted by the human mind, in consequence of the belief of the gospel, and as a principle of all other Christian obedience; yet we are not justified by our appropriating persuasion, but by the righteousness we appropriate, even as *Palæmon* says, we are justified by what we believe, and not by faith, as a principle of life and action. See obs. on p. 483.

"And here we must carefully distinguish betwixt "all works by which men would pretend to acquire "faith, and those which faith produces: for if we will "contend that justification comes by faith without "works, and that there is no acceptable working but "what follows upon this, and yet maintain that faith "is acquired by works, we undoubtedly reason in a "circle.—And however seriously and devoutly we may "be occupied in this kind of reasoning, it is evident "we are employed in nothing else but solemn trick "and dissimulation; unless it may be pled in our be-"half, that we are imposing on ourselves by the same "means by which we impose upon others.

"Men are justified by the knowledge of a righte-"ousness finished in the days of *Tiberius;* and this "knowledge operates upon them, and leads them to "work righteousness. *If ye know*, says the apostle "*John, that he is righteous, ye know that every one "that doth righteousness is born of him.* Faith is not "acquired, but is obtained, as *Peter* says, (τοις λαχουσι) *To "them who have* OBTAINED BY LOT *like precious "faith with us.* Of two criminals justly condemned "to die, if one escapes by a favourable throw of the "dice, and the other dies for his crime, we see mercy "in the deliverance of the former, and no injustice "in the death of the latter. Two men may be em-"ployed with equal diligence in studying the scrip-"ture, and with equal seriousness in praying for di-"vine assistance; the one may come to know the "truth, and the other may grope in the dark all his "lifetime. He who comes to know it, plainly per-"ceives that he has found what he was not seeking "after: He plainly sees, that his most serious devo-"tion was pointed in direct opposition to what now "comforts him." p. 406, 407.

Nevertheless, the truth being declared, they may, like the noble *Bereans*, search the scriptures, *whether these things are so?*

"Thus

"Thus the word of life is held forth in the world—"serving as a mean of divine appointment to lead "some to the faith, and render others inexcusable." p. 408.

This is a proper reply to *Palæmon*'s own objection, p. 350. "That the grant of the gospel is a gift of be-"nefits to multitudes who are never benefited there-"by." It serves as a means of divine appointment to lead some to faith, and leave others inexcusable.

"The change made upon a man by the belief of "the gospel, may be thus illustrated: When *Lazarus* "was revived to the enjoyment of this mortal life, "neither his will, nor his power were concerned in "the obtaining of life. Yet his life could no other-"wise be continued and enjoyed, but in his voluntary "exercise of it. As soon as he revived, the principle "of self-preservation, with all its hopes and fears, "behoved immediately to be set in motion. No soon-"er was he possessed of life, than the active love of it "behoved to take place. Accordingly no sooner does "a man begin to know the grace of God in truth, "than love to it takes place in his heart. Love is "the activity of that life which a man obtains by "faith, for faith worketh by love." *Ibid.*

But what is all this to the doctrine of working in painful desire and fear, till we come to the enjoyment of life, or the knowledge that we have life? *Lazarus* had no principle of self-preservation before he was conscious he had a self to preserve, nor had he any love of life before he enjoyed it. In like manner, we can have no love to that grace of God we know not, nor desire to preserve that life we never enjoyed.

"If a man of low condition, is by a royal patent "ennobled, and entitled to a place in the politest as-"semblies, he cannot enjoy the pleasures of his pro-"motion, but in as far as he loves and studies to learn "the manners suitable to his rank and company." p. 409.

And

And his motive to this improvement of these manners is, that he is promoted to a station he desires to enjoy more perfectly. So we being called to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ, toil no more in the way of painful desire and fear, to attain to a consciousness of the privilege, but as partakers of it, are influenced thereby.

"The apostle *John*, speaking of obedience to the "new commandment of love, says, *Beloved, if our "hearts condemn us not, then have we confidence to-"wards God;* that is, if, notwithstanding our natural "bias against the gospel, with its remaining effects, "giving us daily disquiet, our heart condemn us not "as destitute of love to that truth which the world "hates, then we have confidence towards God; even "as much confidence as the testimony of our own "conscience can give us." p. 414.

This is plainly not the confidence which the truth itself affords a guilty sinner, but confidence "that "we are not destitute of love to that truth the world "hates." The former is our life, the latter is only an additional corroborating comfort.

"Yet this is but one witness, and needs to be sup-"ported. For in this case one may be liable to doubts, "lest even his own conscience should be partial in his "favour."

If we have confidence in Christ by the truth itself as we are guilty sinners; if I am conscious that the truth, or, which is the same thing, my faith, and confidence in it, works by love; if our hearts condemn us not in this matter, then have we confidence towards God. First, because we are conscious we proceed on divine authority. Secondly, we prove the blessed effect of the truth. These then are two witnesses inseparably united. The first a divine truth, the testimony of the divine Spirit, than which there cannot be a greater ground of certainty; the latter is the consciousness of the effect of that truth.

"Here

" Here then the Spirit of truth, who never fails to " bear witneſs to the genuine effects thereof, gives " his teſtimony as a ſecond witneſs ſupporting the " former. Thus *Paul*, after he had ſaid, *As many as* " *are led by the Spirit of God, they are the ſons of God;* " adds, *The Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit,* " *that we are the children of God.*" p. 417.

The apoſtle *Paul*, after he had ſaid, *As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the ſons of God;* adds, *For ye have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received* (*i. e.* by the goſpel-truth) *the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;* and then follow the words, *The Spirit itſelf* (which ye received in the hearing of the goſpel, emboldening us guilty ſinners to cry, *Abba, Father*, through the divine righteouſneſs freely given to us; this Spirit received in the goſpel) *beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God*, and not of them who deceive themſelves with vain thoughts.

It is already granted, p. 397. that " the Spirit of " truth never ſpeaks one word or ſentence to any " perſon beyond what is written in the ſcripture." And what is written in the ſcripture is either the declarations of free ſalvation to ſinners in Jeſus Chriſt, or divine aſſurances of no diſappointment to them that believe on Chriſt, or an account of the genuine effects of faith. In the firſt we are taught to apply what is ſaid to ourſelves as ſinners: In the ſecond we are encouraged to believe on the Lord Jeſus Chriſt, in aſſurance of ſalvation by him without diſappointment: In the laſt we are informed of the genuine effects of this truth, or faith, correſponding to what we find and feel to be true, when we believe according to that which is written,

" And this he (*i. e.* the Spirit) does by ſhedding " abroad in the heart ſuch an abundant ſenſe of the " divine love, as leaves no room for, ſo caſts out,

" the

" the anxious fear of coming ſhort of life everlaſt-
" ing." *Ibid.*

The love ſhed abroad in the heart, is that manifeſted in Chriſt dying for the ungodly when enemies and without ſtrength. Not love manifeſted to the qualified. For *if when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son* (given freely unto us,) *much more being reconciled*, as is apparent to us in what we believe, and in its genuine effects, we have a hope (that maketh not aſhamed) that *we ſhall be ſaved by his life;* that he who gave us righteouſneſs while enemies, will ſave us for ever who are thus reconciled to him.

" Thus that love to the truth, which formerly
" wrought in a way of painful deſire, attended with
" many fears, is perfected by being crowned with
" the higheſt enjoyment it is capable of in this mor-
" tal ſtate." *Ibid.*

I do not read in the ſcripture of any love to the truth of the goſpel ſo deſcribed. *Herein is love, not that we loved God*, and he crowned us with enjoyment, *but that he loved us, and ſent his Son, his only begotten Son, into the world, that we might live through him;* ſent his Son *to be a propitiation for our ſins. If we who are of this truth love one another, his love is* already *perfected in us. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. Herein is our love made perfect. He that feareth*, and is not emboldened by the truth to venture his everlaſting concerns upon Jeſus Chriſt alone, *is not made perfect in love. We love him becauſe he firſt loved us, purifying our ſouls by obeying the truth through the Spirit; unto the unfeigned love of the brethren*, as its proper and genuine effect.

" Jeſus Chriſt, who loved his Father with a perfect
" heart, even while ſorrowful unto death, received
" the higheſt proof of his being the beloved Son of
" God, when being exalted at the Father's right hand,
" and being made moſt bleſſed with a ſenſe of his
" love,

" love, he experienced fulneſs of joy in his preſence." *Ibid.*

But he knew he was the Son of God before he had this higheſt proof; he, though ſorrowful unto death, had none of the anxious fear of coming ſhort of his glory, but was animated by that glory. *For the joy that was ſet before him, he endured the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame.* He received the word in its accompliſhment, as the higheſt confirmation of the veracity of what his Father had ſpoken. But ſurely he ſhewed himſelf entirely ſatisfied with the bare teſtimony, when he anſwered the tempter, *Man ſhall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*

" The report of this draws them who believe it to " love him, and ſuffer for his ſake. To ſuch Jeſus " Chriſt promiſed fellowſhip with him in the fulneſs " of joy." *Ibid.*

That *fulneſs of joy* muſt be in the life to come, according to *Pſal.* xvi. 11. For in this life we walk by faith and not by ſight, and hope which is ſeen is not hope. And it is alſo acknowledged, that Jeſus himſelf did not enter into this joy till he ceaſed from this world.

John xv. 10, 11. " *If ye keep my commandments, ye* " *ſhall abide in my love, even as I have kept my Father's* " *commandments, and abide in his love. Theſe things* " *have I ſpoken unto you, that my joy might remain in* " *you, and that your joy might be full.*" Ibid.

The commandments here ſpoken of are to believe, and love for the truth's ſake. The love and joy is that which is manifeſted by the word in this life; and which neither *life, nor death, nor angels, principalities, nor powers*, nor any kind of ſuffering nor affliction, ſhall be able to ſeparate us from. Nevertheleſs, we yet but hope for the fulneſs of joy that Jeſus is now arrived at, with *hope that maketh not aſhamed*, but animates us to be followers of Jeſus, *enduring the croſs, deſpiſing the ſhame.*

" When the saving truth first shines into the hearts " of men, the effect is suitable to the divine promise, " *Jer.* xxxii. 40. *I will put my fear in their hearts,* " *that they shall not depart from me.* This fear dwell- " ing in their hearts, checks and recalls them when " ready to be utterly led away by their former evil " inclinations. They are preserved from falling a- " way, by the fear of falling away." p. 419. 420.

This is no more than a fear of caution, consistent with the utmost confidence of the sufficiency of Christ, and the veracity and faithfulness of God. Consistent with a firm persuasion, that nothing shall *be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.* The slavish fear which ariseth from uncertainty, and is seeking after a differencing something to remove our torment, is so far from preserving us from falling, that it is rather a proof we are not satisfied with the sufficient righteousness, with the sufficient ground of faith and hope, and have at present no part or lot in the matter.

" It is evident, that to have the Holy Spirit as the " comforter and earnest of the heavenly inheritance, " is an attainment far beyond any influences of the " Spirit that are common to those who believe for a " time, and those who believe to the saving of the " soul. Yea, beyond the regenerating work of the " Spirit, by which men are at first brought to the " knowledge of the truth, and taught to love it." p. 420.

" *To find by experience* (in the effects of the report on " our minds) *the truth of what they formerly believed on* " *testimony*," (which is what *Palæmon* declares himself to mean, p. 416.), is certainly an attainment of another kind than the joy and comfort of the truth itself. But that a conscious certainty, that " *I depend on the* " *promise of Christ, and run all hazards for his sake,*" is what the scripture means by the *comforter* and *earnest* of the heavenly inheritance, does not so evidently ap-

pear:

pear: becauſe, 1. This is not taking of things of Chriſt, but taking of our things, and ſhewing them to us. 2. It is not the Spirit's bearing witneſs itſelf with our ſpirits, but bearing witneſs by the medium of our obedience. 3. It would be ſpeaking more to us than what is written in the ſcripture. 4. This conſciouſneſs, and the joy accompanying it, was an attainment of the people of God before the reſurrection of Chriſt, as really as it has been ſince; whereas the Comforter promiſed was to be the conſequence of Chriſt's aſcenſion to his Father, and was firſt performed on the day of Pentecoſt, *Acts* ii. 33. Laſtly, To wait for an attainment far beyond the knowledge of the truth, or, which is the ſame thing, of the power of Chriſt's reſurrection, ſerves, in fact, to ſet aſide that reſurrection as inſufficient, ſo to deny the one thing needful. More eſpecially as, according to *Palæmon*,

" *It* (this ſuppoſed attainment) *muſt be diſtinguiſhed* " *from any joy or ſpiritual delight which neceſſarily at-* " *tend the obtaining of faith, or its beginning to work by* " *love.*" And " *that it is vain and abſurd to call men* " *to be aſſured of their being children of God, when they* " *are not enjoying it.—That it cannot further appear that* " *any man has known the grace of God in truth, than he* " *gives all diligence to the end, in order to obtain it.*" p. 420. Now the grand arcanum in *Palæmon*'s doctrine is, how a man can live entirely by the *one thing needful*, and yet be ſo diligently employed in labouring for ſo important a *ſomething more?*

" It is alſo plain, that the promiſe of the Spirit as " the Comforter is common to all thoſe who follow " the faith and practice of the apoſtles." *Ibid.*

It is plain, they were comforted by the Spirit of God, in the joy of the truth concerning Jeſus the Saviour of ſinners, and had alſo the additional comfort of thoſe confirming declarations concerning the children of God and their bleſſings, which are recorded for that purpoſe. But that we are taught to wait

for any other attainment, under the name of the Spirit, as the Comforter, does not appear.

"Their (the *Jews*) appropriation was the great "spring of all their pride, of all their disaffection to "the true gospel, and all their ruin." p. 424.

The *Jews* appropriation was upon the ground of the difference between themselves and others; which we readily agree has this effect, that "*the more men* "*excelled in this way, they proved the more hardened* "*enemies to the true God, and the eternal happiness of* "*mankind.*" p. 422. But what is this for an objection to that appropriation which proceeds entirely on the free grant of heaven to the guilty, excluding all such difference? *Aspasio* is still left to affirm of his appropriation, that "*nothing will be so powerful to* "*produce holy love, and willing obedience, to exalt our* "*desires, and enable us to overcome the world.*"

Who stands nighest to the *Jewish* appropriation, *Aspasio* or *Palæmon? Aspasio*, who in *dial.* 16. vol. iii. compares "those *who advise us to prove our title to* "*comfort by genuine marks of conversion, and teach us* "*on this column to fix the capital of assurance, unto* "*those who would fix the dome of a cathedral upon the* "*stalk of a tulip,*" or *Palæmon*, who judges this "*talking profanely.*" p. 425. Neither do I see how this is talking profanely, until it is first proved, that the marks whereby we suppose ourselves entitled to comfort rather than others, are the Deity in which we are to put our trust. *Aspasio* rightly judges, that this is placing a most weighty affair upon that most slight and uncertain foundation, what we feel, or do, instead of the Rock Christ, given to guilty sinners. Does not the Holy Ghost prove a comforter, by manifesting to us, guilty sinners, *the things that are freely given of God; taking of the things of Christ, and shewing them to us?* And must not every genuine mark of conversion have its foundation here?

"*He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that*

"*sent*

" *ſent me, hath everlaſting life, and ſhall not come into* " *condemnation, but is paſſed from death to life*, John " v. 24. *Here we ſee how men paſs from death to life.*" p. 426.

The word that Jeſus hath ſpoken, and the declaration the Father hath made, is the firſt and ſureſt ground of undeceivable certainty. The dependence hereon proceeds entirely on the *truth* and *faithfulneſs* of God; and that dependence is the aſſurance we have pleaded for; and they who thus depend, our Lord declares *have everlaſting life*, are already *paſſed from death to life*.

" Here we ſee how men paſs from death to life. " *John* declares how they come to know this; while, " plainly pointing at the words of Jeſus, he ſays, *We* " *know that we are paſſed from death to life, becauſe* " *we love the brethren*," Ibid.

There is no foundation for the diſtinction here made by *Palæmon*, viz. *That our Lord only declares how men paſs from death to life*, and *John only declares how they come to know this*. It is plain, that our Lord's declaration runs in the ſame ſtrain with that of his diſciple; our Lord ſays, He that heareth my word—*is paſſed from death unto life*. *John* ſays, He that loveth the brethren, *is paſſed from death unto life;* where is the difference? Both are declarations of who are paſſed from death to life, therefore both alike in that reſpect. Our Lord intimates, the life-giving *word* the matter believed by all who are paſſed from death to life; his diſciple intimates, the proper and genuine *effect* of that word on all who believe. " *We know* (ſays *John*, we have an additional proof, that the word of Jeſus is true) *that we are paſſed from death unto life, becauſe we love the brethren*. It is plain, that they abide ſtill in death who abide in the hating murdering ſpirit of the world; and more eſpecially, who cannot love them who are of the *truth* for the *truth*'s *ſake*. On the other hand, the uniting life-giving tendency of the

truth,

truth, appears to us who are of it, since it causeth us thus to love one another for *the truth's sake*, and proves what Jesus said, that *he that heareth his word, and believeth on him that sent him, is passed from death to life.*"

Jesus saith, He is passed from death to life *that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me. John* saith, *We know he has passed from death to life who loves the brethren.* The only difference is, Jesus declares the privilege by that whereby we enjoy it; *John* gives proof in the love of the brethren, as a demonstrative effect, that Jesus's words are true.

" By this proof, men come to know, that the joy " they had upon their first believing, was not the joy " of the hypocrite." *Ibid.*

The joy true believers have on their first believing, is the joy of the truth. If that we rejoice in is found to be true, our joy is proved genuine.

" And so their joy is made full." *Ibid.*

Our *joy* is not made full by a discovery of itself, but by farther confirmations of that truth which begat and supports it. The believer gives an account of his *faith and joy* when he gives an account of what he believes and rejoices in. And it is made full by a farther supply or confirmation, of the truth and faithfulness of God on which he depends.

" By this they come to know it was the genuine " truth of God, and not any human counterfeit and " corruption of it, which they at first believed." *Ibid.*

The genuine truth of God makes itself manifest to be such at our first believing, 1 *Thess.* ii. 13.—1 *John* i. 10. and thereby begets faith, joy, and every other effect. He that waits for such effect, to know whether he has the genuine truth or no, may finish his inquiry, by reminding himself that he is in this inquiry very evidently but upon the search, and therefore has not found truth as yet. He may also be convinced his search is wrong and preposterous, as if a man that should

ſhould make an inquiry after what was proper food, ſhould, inſtead thereof, be waiting to know by certain effects, whether he had eat any or no. The noble *Bereans* inquired after truth, by ſearching the ſcripture to ſee whether *thoſe things were ſo; therefore* (it is added) *many of them believed.* The truth was made manifeſt unto them as the truth of God. And when this was the caſe, they did not wait for the joy of it with its effects, to know whether it was ſo or no.

" Thus they receive an additional knowledge and " certainty about the truth, in the way of experience, " by perceiving that it works effectually in them, pro- " ducing its genuine effects."

If the experience of the effects of the genuine goſpel, produces only an additional knowledge and certainty from experience, as the firſt knowledge and certainty came by divine evidence of the truth itſelf; this is all we plead for, then we are again agreed.

" As often as the apoſtles ſpeak of their intereſt in " Chriſt, and life eternal, or uſe any language to that " effect, we ſhall find that they either ſpeak of them- " ſelves ſeparately, or in conjunction with thoſe only " who are poſſeſſed of the ſame unfeigned faith and " love with them." *Ibid.*

That the apoſtles wrote their epiſtles to profeſſed believers, may be very readily admitted. As on the other hand, that the apoſtles did not live by Chriſt alone, under the notion and view of themſelves as guilty ſinners, but only through a medium or diſcovery of their own faith, love, *&c.* will be very difficult to be proved, however confidently aſſerted.

" *Hereby we*, who love the brethren, *perceive the* " *love of God, becauſe he laid down his life for us.* We " who are conſcious of the effects, and enjoy the fruits " of the atonement, know that God firſt loved us, " and had a peculiar regard to us in providing the " atonement." p. 428.

The effects and fruits of the atonement, are ſinners

peace

peace with God; their *access to the holiest of all* thereby; if it is allowed that we enjoy and are conscious of these, we are again agreed. But if *Palæmon* means only being conscious of "working in the way of "painful desire and fear, till we are crowned with "enjoyment," there cannot be a plainer deviation from the intent of the apostle. The apostle says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, *because he laid down his life for us*. *Palæmon* says, Hereby perceive we the love of God, because we are conscious of the effects, and enjoy the fruits of the atonement. The apostles lead us to think he laid down his life for us who were justly doomed to eternal death. *Palæmon* leads us to think he laid down his life for us, who can say, God, I thank thee, I am not as other men; "*who can find* "*some reason about themselves, why all the great things* "*spoken and done by Jesus, should bear its peculiar di-*"*rection towards them.*"

Besides, how does it appear we love the brethren, when those we call so, are seeking the reason of their hope, certainty, and assurance of eternal life, wholly in their own love and obedience? consequently are not in this respect the *despised few*, but of the same mind and judgment with every natural man.

"He who perceiving the divine love to sinners of "all sorts without distinction, manifested in the a-"tonement, is thereby led to love the atonement, "and the divine character appearing there; and so to "enjoy the promised comfort resulting thence to the "obedient." p. 428.

If the promised comfort is suspended for want of obedience, or depends on obedience as its condition, the divine love is far from being manifested to sinners of all sorts without distinction.

"And thus by happily experiencing the truth of "the gospel." *Ibid.*

He does not experience the truth of the gospel, but only the effect of that doctrine that tells him, if he is willing

willing and obedient, he ſhall eat the good of the land. Whereas, the truth of the goſpel, relieving the guilty without condition, animates thereby to all the obedience it calls for.

" So he labours neither firſt nor laſt to acquire any " requiſite to juſtification; but all his labour proceeds " on the perſuaſion that the atonement itſelf is the " ſole and ſufficient requiſite to juſtification." *Ibid.*

All his labour proceeds on the perſuaſion, that however ſufficient the atonement may be for the elect, yet he is not allowed to account it of any uſe to him a ſinner, or to truſt or depend upon it, but to be at an entire uncertainty about it, until he diſcovers his works of obedience to ſuch a degree, as to conceive himſelf to be an elect perſon.

" So he knows, that all his holineſs, as well as all " his happineſs, comes entirely of that grace which " provided the atonement." p. 439.

Far from it; all his holineſs, as well as all his happineſs, according to *Palæmon*'s repreſentation, comes entirely of the painful deſire and fear, leſt he ſhould have no part in that grace which provided the atonement.

" The merchant who, being encouraged by ſome " credible intelligence Providence has favoured him " with, from an unexpected quarter, ſets out all ha- " zards on ſome new branch of traffic, will be great- " ly animated to proceed, when he finds his labours " crowned with ſucceſs." *Ibid.*

But our obtaining ſalvation is not like a trading merchant ſetting out at all hazards on a new branch of traffic; this is ſalvation by works indeed! *Matth.* xiii. 45. deſcribes the merchant as finding one pearl of great price, which puts an end to all future merchandizing.

" He who ſo knows the bare report thereof, as to " love it, and to run all riſks upon it, ſhall in no wiſe " loſe his reward." *Ibid.*

True, but *Palæmon*'s Christian rather runs all risks in order to know his part in the atonement, than on the account of the bare report of salvation to the guilty.

"The passages in the dialogues which appear to "me to deserve the greatest censure, are those two, "which in a very confident manner deny; the one, "the comfort attending the simple report of the gos-"pel; and the other, the additional comfort attend-"ing the self-denied obedience to it." *Ibid.*

These passages have been considered, and it appears that neither are denied, but confirmed by *Aspasio*'s doctrine. We proceed on the report in appropriation, so it is the very basis of our comfort. We are confirmed by the effect of the enjoyment, that our enjoyment, or the foundation of it, is not a fancy.

"And all this is done, in order to rest, I cannot "say our comfort, but a good opinion of our state, "on what is neither faith nor obedience." *Ibid.*

Not so, but to rest our souls on Christ alone, and neither on our faith, obedience, nor good opinion of our state.

"For, according to the popular doctrine, men li-"ving for a course of years together in unbelief, con-"sequently neither loving the gospel nor enjoying the "comfort of it, are allowed to consider themselves "all the while as regenerate, provided they have once "in their lifetime exerted a certain act." p. 330.

It may be so according to the *popular* doctrine; but according to the *unpopular doctrine*, which *Palæmon* excepts against, we depend upon no acts but the perfect obedience of Christ.

"I shall now take some notice of a treatise highly "esteemed by the votaries of the popular doctrine: "I mean, *The gospel-mystery of sanctification.*" Ibid.

This book was so far from being highly esteemed by the votaries of the popular doctrine in *England*, it was hardly known till *Aspasio* recommended it,

and

and ſince that diſapproved of by many devout people: Becauſe, 1. It proves that the moſt earneſt deſires and endeavours after obedience to the law, may be in the natural ſtate of man. 2. That the new life, new ſtate, or new creation, is inſeparably in Chriſt; ſo that we have no ſuch privilege, but in enjoying Chriſt himſelf through the report of the goſpel. 3. That there is no furniture for the obedience of love, but in partaking of this reconciliation, or new ſtate in Chriſt. 4. That no conditions or performances are to be placed between the ſinner and the Saviour, but the firſt ſtep of practical religion is to truſt on Chriſt alone, as given to us for the ſure enjoyment of himſelf and his ſalvation.

"This author ſuppoſes his unconverted reader, "when beginning to be concerned about religion, to "propoſe for this end ſuch an obedience to the divine "law, as may be acceptable to God."

He rightly ſuppoſes, that men who are yet in their natural ſtate, may attain with great zeal to great heights of legal obedience, and, as *Paul* and others, be very earneſt after it, counting it their trueſt gain; and like *Paul*, at the ſame time, totally unacquainted with, yea enemies unto real Chriſtianity, and the obedience of love to the truth, and to God manifeſted thereby.

"According to this author, then, Chriſt is not the "end of the law for righteouſneſs, but the beſt means "one can make uſe of for enabling him to perform "that righteouſneſs which is the end of the law." *Ibid.*

He (as the apoſtle does) directs unto that love which is the fulfilling of the law, by the enjoyment of that righteouſneſs which is the end of it, by enjoying that new ſtate of peace and reconciliation with God which is inſeparably in Chriſt; or, in fact, his view is, to recommend the goſpel of our Lord Jeſus, as a principle of obedience, in oppoſition to that preliminary

grace, which, as *Palæmon* well says, p. 445. "*how-*
"*ever much it has been christianized, is at bottom the*
"*same thing with that divine* AFFLATUS, *influence,*
"*or energy, by which it was supposed philosophers and*
"*heroes of old became good and great men.*"

"Accordingly the well-disposed reader is led for-
"ward to his desired end, in consequence of the same
"good dispositions that led him to use the means."
p. 431.

Not so, however fair the directions may seem to promise at first to him that is naturally desirous to keep the law that he may live; yet no man is made a disciple to these directions, but by being converted from this false hope, to the hope of the gospel. No man is disposed to use the means of reconciliation with God by Christ alone as a principle of obedience; but he that is converted from the false hope of obtaining life by any obedience he can render, to live alone by what Christ hath already done, as the spring of his hope, and the source of his future obedience.

"But why all this round-about course? Why
"should we seek to repress any man's impetuosity to
"fulfil the law? Why should we retard his course,
"by entangling him in a labyrinth about the use of
"means?" *Ibid.*

Men, naturally desirous to keep the law, that they may live, may, and do, as Mr *Marshall* observes, "*rush*
"*blindly upon immediate practice, making more haste than*
"*good speed, crying with* Israel *of old, All that the*
"*Lord saith we will do. At the same time there is no*
"*such heart in them.*" But through a natural propensity to those things which are contrary to the divine law, they continually fail in the obedience they have so strongly purposed. "*And some of these, when they*
"*have misspent many years in striving against the stream*
"*of their lusts, without any success, do at last fall mi-*
"*serably into despair, and turn to wallow in the mire*
"*of their lusts, or are fearfully swallowed up with hor-*
"*ror*

" *ror of conſcience.*" As all their religion, or impetuoſity to fulfil the law, is founded on a miſerable miſtaken hope, to live by their own obedience; ſo Mr *Marſhall*'s aim is to throw down that *falſe hope*, by proving that there can be no obedience acceptable to God, till we are firſt made *accepted in the Beloved;* or, in other words, till we firſt live by Chriſt's obedience alone, and are influenced thereby. His hope to live by his own obedience is criminal; it is therefore no matter how ſoon we repreſs his impetuoſity, and retard his courſe; and when he underſtands his reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone, to be the principle, or means of goſpel-obedience, he will not be entangled in a labyrinth, but made free by the Son of God.

" As for the goſpel, it was only intended to relieve " thoſe ill-diſpoſed people who deſpair of ever doing " any thing to render them acceptable to God, by any " aſſiſtance whatſoever." *Ibid.*

And Mr *Marſhall*'s deſign is to ſhew, that thoſe *well-diſpoſed* people who hope to live by their own obedience, are, in fact, at the ſame time, thoſe *ill-diſpoſed* people, who will never be really obedient till they deſpair of ever doing any thing to render them acceptable to God, by any aſſiſtance whatſoever; and, in that deſpair of themſelves, live alone by what Chriſt has already done.

" It (the goſpel) was never intended to be an auxi- " liary to thoſe good people who are deſirous to give " acceptable obedience to the divine law." p. 431.

But it was intended to remove their miſtake, that they may be obedient from a more divine principle; that is, reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone. And this, it is evident, is the main deſign of Mr *Marſhall*.

" All ſuch (who are deſirous to give acceptable o- " bedience to the divine law) whereſoever they are, " ſhall undoubtedly be happy, without having any " occaſion to trouble their heads about the goſpel." p. 431. 432.

All

All such who are of this character uniformly, and without contradiction. But it must be allowed, that there are many, even every natural man has a propensity to live by his own obedience, or to do, that he may live. At the same time, he is desirous of those things which are contrary to that obedience, whereby he forfeits the character, and becomes guilty before God.

"Let us now observe the use of means to which "our author directs, *direct.* 11. p. 208. Endeavour "*diligently* to perform the great work of *believing* on "Christ." p. 432.

That is, in Mr *Marshall*'s sense, endeavour diligently to live by Christ alone, to be satisfied with him, to assure your soul of salvation by him, by what he has done and suffered; that you may, in this way, have a personal conscious enjoyment of him and his fulness, in which fulness we enjoy reconciliation with God, and every blessing tending to the obedience of love. Was *Palæmon* to direct to personal conscious enjoyment of Christ, he would tell us about working diligently, working in the way of painful desire and fear, till we were crowned with enjoyment, in a conviction that we were distinguished from others, by having faith, love, and self-denied obedience. Where lies the difference between the two, but that the latter says, Do that you may live; that you may be crowned with enjoyment? the other says, Live by Christ, that you may do? Enjoy as sinners, that you may live as saints.

"It is necessary that we should endeavour it, (*i. e.* "to believe on Christ,) and that before we can find "the Spirit of God working faith effectually in us, or "giving strength to believe." *Ibid.*

Mr *Marshall* here considers faith as a duty required by the law, which *Palæmon* also asserts, p. 354. At the same time, he so explains himself, as it is evident faith neither justifies nor sanctifies as a duty; but by Christ

Chriſt alone believed on. And it is alſo evident, he means not the divine paſſive conviction, but an obedience to the apoſtolic exhortation; a "truſting on "a Saviour as diſcovered by a teſtimony, which (as "he ſays) is properly *believing on him*."

He oppoſes, at the ſame time, the popular notion, that we muſt wait for God to give us ſomething called faith, before we are to attempt to believe, or live by his righteouſneſs; whereas, in whomſoever faith is wrought, they immediately live by Chriſt alone; they wait for nothing, they ſee nothing to be waited for, but they ſee Chriſt's ſufficient work, and the grant of it to the guilty, a ſufficient ground for immediate truſt and confidence.

"Only (ſays Mr *Marſhall*) I ſhall prove, that we "are bound, by the command of God, thus to aſ-"ſure ourſelves; and the ſcripture doth ſufficiently "warrant us, that we ſhall not deceive ourſelves in "believing a lie; but according to our faith ſo ſhall "it be to us, *Matth.* ix. 29.—Here (ſays *Palæmon*) "is the great whirlpool of the popular doctrine." p. 433.

A very great miſtake to call this the popular doctrine; whereas Mr *W*——*d*, Mr *W*——*y*, and numbers more, ſuch as have been named, are full as great adverſaries to it as himſelf. Nor is any point more univerſally oppoſed, than that of aſſuring ourſelves of ſalvation, only from the grant of a ſufficient righteouſneſs in Jeſus Chriſt to the guilty.

"When we have thus, according to our author, "wrought ourſelves into a new ſtate." *Ibid.*

This repreſentation is not juſt; would it be proper, when a man receives a preſent, or gift, to ſay that he works himſelf into it? It is true, he may meet with ſome oppoſition in the enjoyment of that which is freely given him. And in this caſe, the ſcripture prevents *Palæmon*'s reflection, by exhorting us to work out our own ſalvation, *&c.*

"According

" According to him, there is no practice of holi-
" neſs, but what proceeds from the perſuaſion of our
" ſtate being changed." *Ibid.*

Rather from our perſuaſion of our reconciliation with God by Chriſt alone, ariſing not from the conceit of our being better than others, or having done ſomething towards it; but as given freely in Chriſt Jeſus.

" This perſuaſion (of his ſtate being changed) is
" his faith." *Ibid.*

No ſuch matter. Mr *Marſhall*'s doctrine, or the truth believed in, his faith is, that there is a new ſtate prepared in Chriſt for the guilty, which we are divinely authoriſed to enter into and enjoy without any works at all. As, on the other hand, *Palæmon*'s doctrine leaves him working in painful deſire and fear, till he be crowned with enjoyment.

" If we hearken to this author, we muſt ſet out in
" the ſervice of God, from the confidence of our be-
" ing in a better ſtate than other men." p. 434.

Is it not highly conſiſtent that we ſhould ſet out in the ſervice of God, with the furniture God hath provided us? If God hath given to us eternal life in his Son, is not our firſt obedience to receive and enjoy the eternal life that is in him? This does not conſiſt in any perſuaſion that we are better than other people, that there is any new ſtate in Chriſt for us rather than for others; but it conſiſts purely in what is inſeparably in Chriſt Jeſus, given to us in him, and only to be enjoyed in enjoying him. So that the whole is, we muſt ſet out as followers of our Lord, from the confidence of the eternal life given freely to us in Chriſt Jeſus.

" He makes no account of the grand things teſti-
" fied of Chriſt, as any way ſufficient to lead us to
" holineſs, without a good opinion of our own ſtate."
p. 435.

Palæmon ſhould ſay, if he would give a juſt repreſentation,

ſentation, that Mr *Marſhall* makes no account of all that holineſs which is not influenced by the reception and enjoyment of that new ſtate, and eternal life, which is freely given to the guilty, in Chriſt Jeſus. Mean-while, the opinion we have of our own ſtate, is, that it is ſtark naught, and cannot be mended. This is far from having a good opinion of it.

" Thus the ancient goſpel, which, from the begin-
" ning, turned many from idols to ſerve the living
" God, is now ſet aſide." *Ibid.*

The ancient goſpel held forth the new ſtate, and eternal life given in Chriſt, which we plead for.

I have nothing to ſay in defence of myſelf from the charge in p. 448. of patronizing my creed by the names of fallible men. I acknowledge my fault. If I have not the doctrine of the apoſtles, what ſignifies having all the world on my ſide? and if I have them to keep me in countenance, it ought to be little concern, though the whole world are againſt me *.

" The

* Methinks this author diſcovers too much complaiſance, when he compliments Mr Sandeman ſo far as to make an apology for his conduct in profeſſing an agreement, in ſome fundamental articles of the Chriſtian faith, which the late Meſſ. Erſkines and the Seceding miniſters in Scotland, according to ſcripture, and the judgment of all ſound Proteſtant divines, and in quoting a few paſſages from a ſermon of Mr Ebenezer Erſkine; as if he had thus made Meſſ. Erſkines, and the Seceding miniſters, with other Proteſtant divines, the vouchers of his creed, and given a manifeſt proof of his yielding implicit faith to their dictates and ſentiments. Is it culpable, then, to yield obedience to our Lord's command in going forth by the footſteps of the flock, Cant. i. 8. or *to remember them who have ſpoken to* us *the word of God, whoſe faith* we are exhorted to *follow, conſidering the end of their converſation!* Heb. xiii. 7. Muſt an endeavour to keep the unity of the faith in the bond of peace be reputed a fault? and a ſovereign contempt of the doctrine and principles of Chriſtian teachers uninſpired, however conſonant to the word of God theſe may be found, accounted eſſential to the character

"The use these people (*i. e.* the people in fellow-"ship with *W. C.*) have for Christ is, to give them "strength to do something toward their justification." p. 449.

Our appropriation stands in no opposition to free justification by Christ alone, but rather to *Palæmon*'s coming to the knowledge of it only, in a way of painful desire and fear.

But *Palæmon*'s main objection to this reception, or appropriation of Christ, and eternal life in him, is, that "*this is doing something toward our justification.*" To what has been already said, I would only add the following illustration: A man has a large estate fallen to him by inheritance or legacy; he is now informed that he need do nothing toward his maintenance at all, for he has a sufficiency to live upon, and that it would dishonour his benefactor, and be a disgrace to him to think of it. The man believes this, and accordingly sits down to a plentiful table provided, under a notion that all things being ready, he has nothing to do but to EAT or ENJOY. Upon this, a virtuoso in criticism, like *Palæmon*, informs him, that to eat, is to do something towards his maintenance, that the victuals, and in short every thing, is his, without any act of his at all. So that if he imagines himself under any necessity of eating, he dishonours his benefactor, and denies the estate his benefactor has given to him, as though it was not in itself enough to maintain him without doing something towards his own maintenance. What answer would this person in all likelihood return? Very probably he would say, You speak extremely absurd; for if I eat not, all my

character of a true believer and apostolic Christian? What pity is it, that men should suffer themselves thus to be bantered, by the scornful and senseless reflections of one of the most trifling, though one of the most arrogant writers that this, or perhaps any age, has produced? *Wilson's Palæmon's creed reviewed and examined*; pref. p. liii. note.

my right and title to it will be of no ſervice to me; I ſtarve, I die in the midſt of plenty; beſides, I love to eat *. The caſe is as parallel as poſſible; our Lord ſays, he is *the bread of God come down from heaven to give life to the world; and that except we eat the fleſh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, we have no life in us.*

This objection of *Palæmon*'s is ſuch a fine-ſpun cobweb of criticiſm, that he ſeems to have catched himſelf in it while he was endeavouring to entangle us. "Is it poſſible (ſays he) after what we have ſeen, for "any one to maintain, that theſe people *look for* ac"ceptance with God only through the ſacrifice of "Chriſt, once offered for the ſins of many?" p. 450.

Now to *look for* acceptance with God only through the ſacrifice of Chriſt, is the very thing we plead for, and he has been oppoſing. His argument has been, "The ſacrifice of Chriſt is ſufficient of itſelf. To ap"propriate, or to *look for* acceptance with God on "that

* If any object, that this repreſentation relates only to perſonal enjoyment, and manifeſtation to our own conſciences, it may be granted; and it may be alſo affirmed, that the whole of God's revelation bears this deſign. The ſcriptures were never deſigned to inform God about our juſtification, but to inform us. And whenever any, who diſlike the ſcripture-account, endeavour to ſcheme out another, what is their deſign, to inform God, or to inform man? If one tells me, I am juſtified (according to his ſcheme) whether I am perſuaded of it or no, is not his deſign at the ſame time very evidently to perſuade me that I am juſtified, or to manifeſt my juſtification according to his ſcheme? Shall I not rather let God be my inſtructor? And when I aſk the queſtion, *Wherewith ſhall God be pleaſed?* he anſwers, *I am pleaſed in my Son.* When I inquire further, How I ſhall know my own intereſt herein? he tells me, *he gives me eternal life in him;* and ſo makes me welcome to call it my own without more. Is it not the height of diſaffection to this, to ſay, I will call it my own upon ſome other account; but not becauſe he either bids me, or gives it to me?

" that account, is evidently to do something towards " our justification; this is to set up in its stead " another sacrifice of their own preparing and offer- " ing.

" He who maintains that we are justified only by " faith, and at the same time affirms with *Aspasio*, " that faith is a work exerted by the human mind," " undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his " words, that we are justified by a work exerted by " the human mind." p. 483.

May not *Aspasio* as readily retort, He who maintains that we are justified only by faith, and at the same time affirms with *Palæmon*, " That faith is a " principle of life and action," undoubtedly maintains, if he has any meaning to his words, that we are justified by a principle of life and action? The answer that retrieves him out of this difficulty, will also serve us. See remark on p. 406, p. 395.

I have now considered all that I apprehend we are concerned with in Mr *Sandeman*'s performance, not with a design to manifest his blemishes, or to defend *Aspasio*'s; but to preserve the important truth he contended for, from the objections arising through evident mistakes and misrepresentations. Not pleading for a *manner* of believing, either *active* or *passive*; but pleading against the private interpretation of those divine declarations, which are the sinner's only ground of immediate trust and confidence in that sufficient righteousness. It is no pleasure to me to find a people to whom my heart inclines on account of their appearing attachment to this sufficiency of Christ, at the same time so inclined to explain away those divine declarations, and tell us, that " God may, if " he pleases, have mercy upon me," is all the conclusion that the guilty and destitute can draw from what God has revealed. Now, in this case, are we not to take heed, lest, under the notion of purer faith, *we depart from trusting in the living God* (to a labouring in painful

painful desire and fear) *through an evil heart of unbelief?* And as there is a natural propensity in man to self-dependence, is there not a proportionate averseness in him to trust on the bare declarations of the divine word? And may not this be the source of those Pharisaic attempts Mr *Sandeman* has so justly detected, of the objections that stand between us; and also of those laboured inventions of others, to make out that men are saved by Christ in a way of natural necessary connection; hereby, at once, setting aside the divine sovereignty, declarations, promises or trust therein. I shall only add, that if what we have pleaded for is (without misrepresentation) proved a contradiction to the sufficiency of the finished work of Christ, then, and not till then, I shall see a necessity for understanding the scriptures on this subject in another light than I do at present, and shall make my public acknowledgment accordingly.

DIRECTIONS

To the Readers of *Theron* and *Aspasio*, with respect to the Amendments which were intended by Mr Hervey, had he survived another edition. —Taken from Mr CUDWORTH's Defence.

VOL. III. p. 8. l. 20. read, "This, he says, as it was wrought in the name and stead of the guilty, enemies and rebellious, was wrought out in my name, and in my stead; that is, in a name and character that undoubtedly belongs to me, and, according to the declarations of divine grace, sufficiently authorises me to draw near to God thereby."

P. 318. l. 4. "Not one among all the numberless productions which tread the ground, or stand rooted to the soil, wants any convenience that is proper for its respective state. And the same heavenly FATHER has

has provided for the moſt guilty, the righteouſneſs which is abſolutely neceſſary to his preſent comfort, and his final happineſs."

P. 319. l. 5. "Conſider thoſe ſtately *poppies*, &c. obſerve the *young ravens*, &c. He accommodates the former, though incapable of aſking; he attends to the latter, though inſenſible of their Benefactor. He alſo *regards* our preſſing wants; he has alſo ſuperſeded our earneſt petitions by ſuch free and unmerited gifts, as it is both his delight and his honour to beſtow."

P. 320. l. 23. "So that nothing is required, in order to our participation of CHRIST and his benefits. We receive them as the freeſt gifts; as matter of mere grace."

P. 322. l. 3. "The man without the wedding-garment, *&c.* Your former miſtakes, and preſent objections, tend to place you in the ſtate of this unhappy creature. The returning prodigal came with no recommendation either of dreſs, of perſon, or of character. None but his nakedneſs and miſery; his acknowledgment was vileneſs, which had every aggravating, not one extenuating circumſtance."

P. 323. l. 19. "If there be any qualification, I think, it is our extreme indigence; and this, I preſume, you are not without."

P. 324. l. 14. "Sanctification, heavenly-mindedneſs, and a victory over our luſts, are not the qualities he *requires*, but the bleſſings which he *confers*."

P. 326. l. 30. "The greateſt *unworthineſs* is no objection in Chriſt's account; it is as much diſavowed by the goſpel, as *equivocal* generation is exploded by the diſcoveries of our improved philoſophy."

P. 329. l. 24. "From the King, *whoſe name is the* LORD *of hoſts*, let us expect (if he vouchſafes to ſhew us any mercy) not barely what correſponds with our low models of generoſity,—much leſs what we ſuppoſe proportioned to our fancied deſerts,—but what is ſuitable to the unknown magnificence of his name, and

and the unbounded benevolence of his heart. Then we shall no longer be afraid, assuredly to trust to the gracious declaration, *that* CHRIST JESUS *is made of* GOD *to us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*: That HE hath *given* himself for us, hath *given* himself to us, with all the blessings of his purchase, of his SPIRIT, and of eternal life."

P. 331. l. 11. "That we all deserve this misery, is beyond dispute. We are also told, that the LORD JESUS has satisfied divine justice."

P. 332. l. 15. "You are *still corrupt;* does this exclude you from being the *very person* for whom the Saviour's righteousness is intended, and to whom it is promised?"

P. 333. l. 3. "And sure it cannot be a fanciful persuasion of our health which renders us proper objects of his recovering grace."

P. 335. l. 3. "I behold it (*Theron*'s title) perfectly clear, not because you long or pray for it; but because the all-sufficient righteousness is granted to you *a sinner* in the record of the gospel."

P. 335. l. 22. "*If any man*, however unworthy his person, or obnoxious his character, *thirst;* thirst for something to make him happy; let him not seek to that which satisfieth not, but *let him come to me* the fountain of living waters, *and drink* his fill.

"The clergyman," *&c.*

P. 336. l. 31. "They are to be enjoyed by *every one*. No exception is made."

P. 337. l. 18. "To us says the prophet, a child is born."

P. 338. l. 19. "Since the LORD JEHOVAH *has given* us his SON and all his unutterable merits; and also seals this grant unto us in every sacramental ordinance; why should we not confide in it, as firmer than the firmest deed? and far more inviolable, than any royal patent?"

"*Ther.* My servant never," &c.

P.

P. 350. l. 21. " It seems to be quite out of my reach."

Asp. " That is, because you still imagine something is to be done by you, to entitle to this immaculate and perfect righteousness; you give no credit to those declarations of heaven, which brings it near to your view and home to your condition. Remember rather the words of our LORD, *Come unto me, all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you rest.*"

P. 351. l. 14. " Nothing short of these mercies, can afford any satisfaction to the guilty conscience, or *true* satisfaction to the restless soul.

" Say not then, my dear friend, that Christ, and the blessings of his purchase, *are beyond* your reach. They are now, even now, at your door.

P. 352. l. 34. " If you heard his voice, you would believe on him agreeable thereto. You then open the door, and *he sups with you*, makes his abode with you, manifests his salvation, and communicates his blessings. If you believed his promising word, you would no longer hesitate to believe on him accordingly. You then *sup with him*. This will be refreshing to your distressed soul, as the most sumptuous banquet to the famished stomach and craving appetite. *Expunge all from here to the words*,

Ther. " This I believe—That I am a lost sinner;" &c.

P. 353. l. 31. " He that believeth on the *Son* hath a chimerical? far from it; a real substantial happiness; even everlasting life.

" Can you doubt of his willingness to save the chief of sinners? or his sincerity in his declarations? Then go to mount *Calvary*."

P. 354. l. 26. " What a stranger was I then, to the blindness of my understanding, and the hardness of my heart; to my bondage under unbelief, and my natural averseness to the way of salvation by grace through faith!"

Asp.

Asp. "Are you sure this is not now your case? This sentiment, though ever so just, will not palliate your present infidelity. Since the Great Jehovah has declared the grant of his Son to you a sinner; since he has thus given you eternal life in him; since he has warranted your immediate reception and enjoyment by his commands, invitations, and promises, you make him a liar in all; you reject his word as not to be depended on, every moment you thus unbelievingly hesitate." *Expunge from here to*

Ther. "But is not faith the work of God's Spirit? how, or in what manner, &c."

P. 356. l. 4. "I very much question, whether I shall ever be able to attain it."

Asp. "The true belief, *Theron*, has no existence without its proper object Christ, and is never to be considered in the light you speak of, that is, as a most refined and exalted virtue. When, upon the divine grant in the word, you behold Christ, as your given righteousness and strength, then you truly believe; you believe God's truth which can never deceive, you receive the gift which enriches you with grace and glory. But permit me to ask," &c.

P. 376. l. 19. "If you rely on the all-sufficiency of his gracious declarations as the foundation of immediate trust or confidence, as well as the all-sufficiency of his power."

l. 25. "Let the most wretched sinner, and most afflicted soul, *trust in the name of the Lord.*"

In note, p. 385. l. 5. "We only affirm, that an appropriating persuasion of salvation by Christ alone, is that confidence which properly answers to the divine report, and grant of a Saviour to be believed on for everlasting life."

P. 394. l. 27. *Asp.* "The *If* is what I greatly question; but of this I am certain, that you are still inclined to spare *Agag*."

P. 395. l. 12. "You ask, whether the state of these

perſons is *ſafe* and their faith *real?* I anſwer, What evidence is there of their *ſafety* or their *faith*, while Chriſt the only ſecurity is neglected, and the free grant of him to ſinners thus diſbelieved? Beſides, why ſhould, &c."

P. 396. l. 11. "GOD has freely loved me ſo as to give his Son unto me; CHRIST has graciouſly died for me, to take ſhare in his death as my own; and the HOLY GHOST ſanctifies me in the belief and appropriating confidence, ariſing from theſe precious truths."

P. 398. l. 30. "When the divine SPIRIT, ſpeaking in the gracious declarations of the goſpel, manifeſts the grant of Chriſt to me a ſinner, then am I enabled to receive and appropriate his death as the deſert of my ſins, and his obedience as the matter of my juſtification."

P. 399. l. 3. "May I firmly believe on Chriſt for everlaſting life? may I firmly believe, that in this infinitely-meritorious Redeemer I have granted unto me pardon and acceptance, &c."

P. 402. l. 21. "I do more than pardon my dear *Theron*. I feel for him, and I ſympathize with him; not becauſe he has not ſufficient evidence from God's word, for truſting in Chriſt for everlaſting life; but becauſe I have alſo felt that perverſe tendency in my own heart, to miſtruſt the infallible word of my God, as tho' he was leſs to be depended on than fallible man."

In like manner, p. 243, 244, 284, 285, 295. were to be corrected, and all other paſſages in his writings which might be underſtood, as making thirſtings, awakenings, earneſt prayers, ſorrows, tears, good deſires, or ſenſe of unworthineſs, as the encouragement for confidence. This Mr *Hervey* acknowledged was inconſiſtent with his main deſign, which was to come to God by him only, who was able to ſave to the uttermoſt; but he had been drawn ſometimes into this way of expreſſing himſelf by too great a regard for the current cuſtoms; and not conſidering, that

that till the divine relieving truth appear in view, the wiſhes and deſires of the diſtreſſed are as much pointed againſt the ſalvation of the guilty, as the careleſſneſs of the profane. He was ſenſible, that "the goſpel-hiſtory gives us no inſtance of an unbeliever diligent to obtain faith;" and therefore intended to expunge every thing that tended to encourage ſuch miſtakes.

When he took notice of "a ſpeculative aſſent to all the principles of religion," he intended by it ſuch agreeing with the current opinions as will ſtand conſiſtent with ſentiments quite ſubverſive of the ſaving truth. Not ſuch a knowledge of the truth as the apoſtle ſpeaks of, when he ſays, *Ye know the truth, and that no lie is of the truth.* He well knew, that there was no man, but he that is taught of God, could be ſatisfied with the apoſtolic account of ſalvation; and would have informed *Theron*, had he had another opportunity, "that if he attempted to do any thing eaſy, or difficult, under the notion of an act of believing, or any other act, in order to his acceptance with God, he only thereby heaped up more wrath againſt himſelf."

He was alſo ſenſible, that a man may be very uſeful and amiable amongſt men, and at the ſame time an utter enemy to the grace of God's kingdom:—That he had been too forward in commendations of thoſe, who were no friends to apoſtolic Chriſtianity. His deſign was only to commend what was amiable in every one, paſſing over their blemiſhes.—In this deſign he acknowledged, he was carried to an extreme. When he ſays of *Eraſmus* and *Locke*, that they ſat at the feet of Jeſus, he only meant to expreſs in an elegant way, that they betook themſelves to the reading of the ſcriptures, and not to vindicate their notions.

And he counted it an obſervation well worthy regard, that "it may be maintained by ſome, that converſion is carried on by grace aſſiſting nature; and

by others, that this matter is wholly conducted by irresistible grace; and yet both sides may be equally disaffected to that doctrine, which maintains the work finished by Christ on the cross, to be the only requisite to justification.—And that while many Christian teachers maintain, that no man can be eminently virtuous without divine energy, they say no more than Heathen philosophers have said before them."

These remarks and observations may be sufficient to direct the intelligent reader of *Theron* and *Aspasio*, to avoid needless objections, and also to improve that performance more agreeably to the scriptures and the author's own mind.

It

It appears by the Letters *prefixed to this* Defence, *that an improvement of Mr* Marshall's *book was intended, to obviate as much as possible all objections; which, through the pressing importunities of the printer, and Mr* Hervey's *hopes of accomplishing a fourth volume of* THERON and ASPASIO, *was not executed. The following is a plan of such improvement, where, by changing the fourteen* directions *into the form of* assertions *or* propositions, *the strongest objections are enervated.*

ASSERTION I.

THAT practice and manner of life, which the scripture calls holiness, righteousness, or godliness, obedience, true religion, is not attained by our most resolved endeavours, but is given through the knowledge of him that has called us to glory and virtue.

ASSERT. II.

No man can love God, till he knows him, nor till he knows him to be his everlasting friend. Therefore the spring of true holiness, is a well-grounded persuasion of our reconciliation with God, and of our future enjoyment of the everlasting heavenly happiness, and of sufficient strength given in him for all that he calls us unto.

ASSERT. III.

These endowments, so necessary to the obedience of love, are continued in the fulness of Christ, and are enjoyed only by union and fellowship with him.

As-

ASSERT. IV.

The means or inſtruments whereby the Spirit of God accompliſheth our union with Chriſt, and our fellowſhip with him in all holineſs, are the goſpel, whereby Chriſt entereth into our hearts, begetting us to the faith whereby we actually receive Chriſt himſelf, with all his fulneſs, unto the hope of eternal life by him. And thus, by the influence of the Spirit of truth, we unfeignedly believe the goſpel, and alſo believe on Chriſt, as he is revealed and freely promiſed to us therein, for all his ſalvation.

ASSERT. V.

The practice of true holineſs is not attained by any endeavours of our natural ſtate, but is a bleſſing of that new ſtate given in Jeſus Chriſt, and partook of by union and fellowſhip with Chriſt through faith.

ASSERT. VI.

Thoſe that endeavour to perform ſincere obedience to all the commands of Chriſt, as the condition whereby they are to procure for themſelves a right and title to ſalvation, and a good ground to truſt on him for the ſame, do ſeek their ſalvation by the works of the law, and not by the faith of Chriſt, as he is revealed in the goſpel: and they ſhall never be able to perform ſincerely any true holy obedience by all ſuch endeavours.

ASSERT. VII.

We are not to imagine, that our hearts and lives muſt be changed from ſin to holineſs, in any meaſure, before we may ſafely venture to truſt on Chriſt for the ſure enjoyment of himſelf and his ſalvation.

As-

ASSERT. VIII.

True holineſs of heart and life, hath its due order where God hath placed it, that is, after union with Chriſt, juſtification, and the gift of the Holy Ghoſt. It is not therefore to be expected, but in that order, as what accompanies ſalvation.

ASSERT. IX.

It is only by the comforts of the goſpel revealing a juſt God and a Saviour, that God works in us to will and to do of his good pleaſure.

ASSERT. X.

The comforts of the goſpel, neceſſary to Chriſtian obedience, contain ſufficient grounds of aſſurance of our ſalvation, not becauſe we believe, but in a way of immediate truſt and confidence. Therefore, inſtead of ſeeking other methods of peace and holineſs, we muſt endeavour to believe or truſt on Chriſt confidently; perſuading and aſſuring ourſelves, according to the divine declarations, that God freely gives to us an intereſt in Chriſt and his ſalvation, according to his gracious promiſe.

ASSERT. XI.

It is therefore belonging to the practical part of the Chriſtian life, to maintain the ſame immediate truſt and confidence in dependence on the divine faithfulneſs, not to ſuffer us to be confounded, that ſo our enjoyment of Chriſt, union and fellowſhip with him, and all holineſs by him, may be continued and increaſed in us.

ASSERT. XII.

The ſcripture calls upon Chriſtians to walk no longer according to the principles or means of practice that

that belong unto the natural or original ſtate of man, but only according to that new ſtate given in Chriſt, which we receive by faith, and the principles and means of practice, that properly belong thereunto; and to ſtrive to continue and increaſe in ſuch a manner of practice.

Assert. XIII.

All ordinances of divine appointment, for the eſtabliſhment and increaſe of our faith and love, are to be conſidered only in this way of believing in Chriſt, and walking in him according to this new ſtate given in him.

Assert. XIV.

That we may be confirmed in holineſs only by believing in Chriſt, and walking in him by faith, according to the former aſſertions, we may take encouragement from the great advantages of this way, and excellent properties of it.

A

Recommendatory Letter

FROM

Mr HERVEY

TO THE

Publiſher of a new Edition of MARSHALL on Sanctification.

SIR,

IT gives me no ſmall pleaſure to hear, that you are going to republiſh Mr MARSHALL's *Goſpel-myſtery of ſanctification* *. The inſtruction, conſolation, and ſpiritual improvement, which I myſelf have received from that ſolid and judicious treatiſe, excite in me a pleaſing hope, that it may be equally inſtructive and advantageous to others.

The recommendation of it in *Theron* and *Aſpaſio*, with which you propoſe to introduce the new edition, is at your ſervice. To this propoſal I conſent the more readily, becauſe Mr MARSHALL's book may be looked upon as no improper *ſupplement* to thoſe dialogues and letters. The author of which intended to have cloſed his plan with a diſſertation on practical holineſs, or evangelical obedience. But this deſign was dropped; partly on account of his very declining

* It is ſaid, by the very beſt judge of propriety in ſacred writing, *Great is the myſtery of godlineſs*, 1 Tim. iii. 16. This paſſage, I preſume, Mr MARSHALL had in his view, when he pitched upon a *title* for his book. And this paſſage will render it ſuperior to all cenſure; unexceptionably juſt and proper.

ning health; partly, becauſe the work ſwelled, under his hands, far beyond his expectation.

He has been adviſed, once more, to reſume the pen; and treat that grand ſubject with ſome degree of copiouſneſs and particularity. If he ſhould be enabled to execute, what he acknowledges to be expedient, the doctrines already diſcuſſed, and the privileges already diſplayed, will furniſh the principal materials for his eſſay. Juſtification, *free juſtification*, thro' the righteouſneſs of JESUS CHRIST, is the ſacred fleece from which he would ſpin his thread, and weave his garment; agreeably to that important text, *Ye are bought with a price;* therefore *glorify GOD* *.—If Providence, in all things wiſe, and in all things gracious, ſhould ſee fit to with-hold either time or ability for the accompliſhment of my purpoſe, I do, by theſe preſents, nominate and depute Mr MARSHALL *to ſupply my lack of ſervice*.

Mr MARSHALL expreſſes my thoughts; he proſecutes my ſcheme; and not only purſues the ſame end, but proceeds in the ſame way. I ſhall therefore rejoice in the proſpect of having the *Goſpel-myſtery of ſanctification* ſtand as a fourth volume to *Theron and Aſpaſio*. Might I be allowed, without the charge of irreverence, to uſe the beautiful images of an inſpired writer, I could with great ſatisfaction ſay, *If* this *be a wall*, that *will build upon it a palace of ivory; if* this *be a door*, that *will incloſe it with boards of cedar* †.

Mr MARSHALL repreſents *true holineſs* as conſiſting in the love of GOD, and the love of man;—that unforced, unfeigned, and moſt rational love of GOD, which ariſes from a diſcovery of his unſpeakable mercy and infinite kindneſs to us; that cordial, diſintereſted, and univerſal love of man, which flows from the poſſeſſion of a ſatisfactory and delightful portion in the LORD JEHOVAH. Theſe duties, of love

* 1 Cor. vi. 20. † Cant. viii. 9.

love to our Creator and our fellow-creatures, are regarded as the sum and substance of the *moral* law; as the root from which all other branches of pure and undefiled religion spring.—Holiness, thus stated, is considered, not as the means, but as a part, a distinguished part of our salvation; or, rather, as the very central point, in which all the means of grace, and all the ordinances of religion, terminate.

Man, in a natural state, is absolutely incapable of practising this holiness, or enjoying this happiness.—If you ask, What is meant by *a natural state?* it is that state, in which we are under the guilt of sin, and the curse of the law; are subject to the power of Satan, and influenced by evil propensities.—From this state none are released, but by being united to CHRIST; or, as the apostle speaks, by *CHRIST dwelling in the heart through faith* *.

Faith, according to Mr MARSHALL, is a *real persuasion*, that GOD is pleased to give CHRIST and his salvation; to give him freely without any recommending qualifications, or preparatory conditions; to give him, not to some sinners only, but to *me* a sinner in particular.—It is likewise an *actual receiving* of CHRIST, with all the benefits, privileges, and promises of the gospel; in pursuance of the divine gift, and on no other warrant than the divine grant.—This last office is particularly insisted on, as an *essential* part, or as the *principal* act of faith. To perform which, there is no rational, no possible way; unless, as our author declares, we do, in some measure, persuade and assure ourselves †, that CHRIST and his salvation are ours.

As

* Eph. iii. 17.

† It is not, by this expression, affirmed, or insinuated, that we are able to produce faith in ourselves, by any power of our own. This self-sufficiency the author has professedly and frequently disclaimed; asserting, That "the SPIRIT of "GOD habitually disposes and inclines our hearts to a right "performance of this most important act."—This manner of

As faith is such a persuasion of the heart, and such a reception of CHRIST, it assures the soul of salvation by *its own* act; antecedent to all reflection on its fruits or effects, on marks or evidences.—It assures the soul of acquittance from guilt, and reconciliation to GOD; of a title to the everlasting inheritance, and of grace sufficient for every case of need.—By the exercise of this faith, and the enjoyment of these blessings, we are *sanctified;* conscience is pacified, and the heart purified; we are delivered from the dominion of sin, disposed to holy tempers, and furnished for an holy practice.

Here, I apprehend, our author will appear singular, this is the place in which he seems to go *quite out of the common road.* The generality of serious people look upon these unspeakable blessings as the reward of holiness; to be received, after we have sincerely practised universal holiness; not as necessary, previously necessary to perform any act of true holiness. This is the stumbling-block, which our legal minds, dim with prejudice, and swollen with pride, will hardly get over.—However, these endowments of our new state are, in our author's opinion, the effectual, and the only effectual expedient, to produce sanctification. They are the very method which the eternal SPIRIT has ordained, for our bringing forth those *fruits of righteousness, which are by JESUS CHRIST unto the glory and praise of GOD* *.—Whereas, if there be any appearances of virtue, or any efforts of obedience, which

speaking is used, I imagine, for two reasons: To point out the first and chief work, which we are to be doing, incessantly and assiduously, till our LORD come: To remind us, that we must not expect to have faith wrought in us, by some fatality of supernatural operation, without any application or endeavour of our own; but that we must make it our diligent endeavour, and our daily business, to believe in CHRIST. We must *labour to enter into this rest*, and *shew all diligence to the full assurance of hope.* * Philip. i. 11.

which ſpring not from theſe motives and means of practice, Mr MARSHALL treats them as "reprobate "ſilver." He cannot allow them the character of *goſpel-holineſs*.

This is the plan, and theſe are the leading ſentiments, of the enſuing treatiſe. To eſtabliſh or defend them, is not my aim. This is attempted, and, I think, executed, in the work itſelf. My aim is, only to exhibit the moſt diſtinguiſhing principles, in one ſhort ſketch, and clear point of view; that the reader may the more eaſily remember them, and, by this key, enter the more perfectly into the writer's meaning.—Let him that is *ſpiritual* * judge; and reject or admit, as each tenet ſhall appear to correſpond or diſagree with the infallible word. Only let candour, not rigour, fill the chair; and interpret an unguarded expreſſion, or a ſeemingly inconſiſtent-ſentence, by the general tenor of the diſcourſe.

We are not to expect much pathos of addreſs, or any delicacy of compoſition. Here the goſpel-diamond is ſet, not in gold, but in ſteel; not where it may diſplay the moſt ſprightly beam, or pour a flood of brilliancy; but where it may do the moſt ſignal ſervice, and afford a fund of uſefulneſs.—Neither is this book ſo particularly calculated for careleſs inſenſible ſinners, as for thoſe who are awakened into a ſolicitous attention to their everlaſting intereſts; who are earneſtly inquiring, with the Philippian jailor, *What ſhall I do to be ſaved* †? or paſſionately crying, in the language of the apoſtle, *O wretched man that I am! who ſhall deliver me from the body of this death* ‡? If there be any ſuch, as no doubt there are many, in the Chriſtian world, I would ſay, with regard to them, as the *Iſraelitiſh* captive ſaid concerning her illuſtrious but afflicted maſter, *Would GOD my maſter were with the prophet that is in Samaria; for he would recover him of*

* 1 Cor. ii. 15. † Acts xvi. 30. ‡ Rom. vii. 24.

of his leproſy *. O that ſuch perſons were acquainted with the doctrines, and influenced by the directions contained in this treatiſe! they would, under the divine bleſſing, recover them from their diſtreſs, and reſtore them to tranquillity; they would *comfort their hearts, and* thereby *eſtabliſh them in every good word and work* †.

But I am going to anticipate what the following extract ‡ ſpeaks. I ſhall therefore only add my hearty wiſhes, that you may meet with encouragement and ſucceſs in the publication of this truly-valuable piece. Since there is, in this inſtance, an evident connection between your private intereſt and the general good; I think you may promiſe yourſelf the approbation and acceptance of the public; as you will aſſuredly have all the ſupport and aſſiſtance that can be given, by,

S I R,

Your humble ſervant,

Weſton-Favell, near Northampton, Nov. 5. 1756.

JAMES HERVEY.

* 2 Kings v. 3. † 2 Theſſ. ii. 17.

‡ This extract, or the recommendation given of this excellent book, entitled, *The goſpel-myſtery of ſanctification*, is to be found in our author's works, vol. iii. p. 389. note.

End of the FOURTH VOLUME.

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